

**XVIII R.25**  
**NOTITIA**

**ISTORICORUM SELECTORUM,**  
**OR**

**Animadversiones upon the Antient**  
**AND**

**Famous GREEK and LATIN**

**HISTORIANS**

---

Written in *French* by the Learned  
**ANCISS LA MOTHE LE VAYER**  
Councillor of State to the present  
*French King*

---

translated into *English*, with some Additions

By **W. D. B. A.**  
Of *Magd. Hall, Oxon.*

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**OXFORD,**

Printed by **L P O N. LICHFIELD**  
Printer to the University, For **R I C.**  
**DAK**; Anno Dom. 1678.



To the Right Honourable  
**J A M E S**  
EARL OF DONCASTER  
Eldest Son to the most noble Prince  
**J A M E S**  
DUKE OF MONMOUTH  
And Beaucleugh

My Lord,

**Y**OUR Lordship whose Greatness  
is to be in Arms, will know how  
useful a virtue Ambition is, and for  
give my pride who desire to be the first  
who shall lay something at Your feet.  
This Treatise was written to instruct  
the present French King when Dau-  
phin in the choice of History, and to  
recommend to him the Ancient Wri-  
ters, who must needs be the Best, be-  
cause they treat of the Ancient virtue.

Your



Your Lordship is the hope of our Age,  
and 'tis the wish of all that Your  
tender years should be seasoned with  
the Love of that Noble Study, in the  
Greek and Roman Historians. Your  
Lordship will see what you have to do  
to be a Hero, but Your Lordship can-  
not have a better example of Great-  
ness than Your Princely Father, who  
is bold in War, calm in Council, tem-  
perate in Peace, and who like Scipio,  
is a perfect Commander in the very  
Spring of his Youth, but this is too  
great a Subject for me though none  
more admires his Virtues, and more  
firmly believes Your Lordship will  
succeed to all his Glory, than

My Lord

Your Lordships most devoted humble  
and most obedient Servant



# THE PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR

I Find my self obliged to write a Preface, to give a reason for the order I observe in the choice of those Historians, whereof I treat. For many persons till they shall have considered of it, may well wonder, that I make no mention of some very famous Authors, who are often ranked amongst the Historians As *Plutarch*, *Diogenes Laertius*, *Philostratus*, and *Eunapius*, of the Greeks, and *Cornelius Nepos*, or *Æmilius Probus* of the Latins, with some Writers of particular lives, such as *Spartian*, *Lampridius*, and others, who compiled the Volume usually called *Historia Augusta*. It is certain that most of them did write very well of the times which they describe, and that the reading of  
of



## 7 The Preface

of their books, where we can have no better recourse than to them, may it not to be neglected? But because none of them compiled a perfect body of History that came to our hands, (it is true that the *Chronicles* of *Cornelius Nepos* are entirely lost; ) my design would not allow me to compile them in this book where-in I only pretend to examine those Writers, who have left us more Universal Histories, and from whom the Laws of History may be best collected. A true and regular History comprehends much more than the single narration of any life whatsoever; And I thought I had reason to reject the writers of the *Historia Augusta*, for if I had put them in the place where they were to be inserted, they would not have contributed to my purpose; All that I see Volume being rather a cold and lifeless Catalogue, than a body of animated History, as it ought to be: The judgment of many of the Learned in that behalf, is suitable to his opinion who calls them in his Preface, *Historie Deonestamenta*. For there is nothing to be gained by reading of them in relation to the rules of History.

unless



## of the Author.

unless it be in a contrary sense, as, by the sound of those bad Players upon the Flute, which *Ismenias* made his Scholars to hear, that they might avoid the faults they observed in his playing. If it be objected that, by omitting these, I might as well have refrained from *Suetonius*, and *Quintus Curtius*, who wrote only Lives; it is easy to shew by the inequality of their labours, to those I decline, that they merited the place they have in this work. For as to the last, I have not so much considered him as a Writer of the *Life* of *Alexander* the Great, as an Historiographer of that great change and Translation of the Empire of the *Persians*, to the *Macedonians*. And as for *Suetonius*, the succession he has left us of twelve Emperors in the space of an Age and more, puts such a difference between him, and those who only published separate Lives without any coherence, that the Learned unanimously confer on him, the Title of an Excellent Historian.

We ought not moreover to esteem all as Historians, who have given the Title of History to their works, *Pliny* that wrote the



## The Preface

the *Natural History*, cannot properly be taken for one; And the same may be said of *Aristotle* and *Alian*, though they compiled Histories of Animals. And if the word Historian were extended as far as it would reach, *Lucan*, *Silius Italicus*, and many other Poets might assume it, in regard of the subject matter of their Poems; upon which nevertheless we have not thought it convenient to make the least reflection, For we find so little relation between History and Poetry, that as the one cannot be without Fable, the other is inconsiderable without truth; and it would be unreasonable not to make a distinction between things of so different a nature, which have scarce any thing in common except the double sense of words.

Neither let it be thought strange to see the number of Greek Historians which I examine, exceed that of the Latins. Which is to be imputed, either to the injury of time that prevailed more over the latter than the former; or to the different Genius of the Nations, which gave that advantage to the *Greeks*, that although the *Roman* Empire was after the *Græcia*, yet the *La-*



## of the Author

*tins* were not so accurate in writing History, as the *Greeks*. For we have found some of their Historians worthy of great consideration even in the time of the Emperor *Justinian*, whereas those who wrote in Latin with a reputation, do not go beyond the age of the *Antonines*, where all the Criticks with a common consent place the Old age of Latin History. Yet I have made it descend a little lower, to place after *Justin*, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, who though a *Gracian* wrote his History in Latin, in the time of *Julian*, *Jovian*, *Valentinian*, and *Valens*, where it ended. If I had not confined my self to the Historians of the first Classe only, I might have made the number of the Latins equal to that of the *Greeks*, and deduced History writ in the *Roman* Language, to *Justinian's* time, by the addition of *Jornandes* and *Cassiodorus*; as I have done the *Greeks* by my Reflections on *Procopius* and *Agathias*. But in the design I had to gather the necessary precepts to write History well, from the Reflections we might make upon such of the Ancients as cultivated it with most skill and reputation, I was content



## The Preface.

to examine the principal of them, imitating in some manner those Pirates, who often let Vessels that are light and of small burthen pass, to fall upon the more laden, as on those where there is more to be gained.

Having in some manner justified my proceedings, it is reasonable that I should acknowledg the great assistance I received from divers persons who favoured my enterprize. The *Two De Fays* were the first who perswaded me to it, and according to their natural goodness, (which so many Schollars find by daily experience) assisted me with Books out of three Great Libraries, to wit, the *Kings*, that of *Monsieur de Thou*, and their own. It is certain that the first could never fall into better hands, and though as all men know it is very considerable, yet it receives at this day its greatest ornament from their judicious conduct, whose presence does even animate the books contained in it. Neither were they content to give me all the help that way I could desire; but as it is said of *Socrates*, that he performed the Office of Midwife to the spiritual de-

Liver



## of the Author.

liveries of the most worthy men of Greece, I should be very ungrateful not to confess, that I am indebted to their learned conferences, for all that is good in this Treatise. Their comparison, and their backwardness hitherto in setting out any thing under their own names ( although their works, when exposed to the eye of the world, will meet with an Universal approbation ) puts me in mind of a thought of *Pliny the Younger*, on the subject of one of his friends. He saies, that they who, though full of Learning and merit, are nevertheless silent, demonstrate a greater strength of wit, than many others who cannot forbear to prostitute what they know; *Alli qui tacent hoc amplius præstant, quod maximum opus silentio cesserunt.* In the next place I must acknowledge the great assistance, I have received from the Library of the most Eminent *Cardinal Mazarin* by the means of his Learned Library keeper *Monsieur Naudé*, who was pleased to add to the effects of his ordinary humanity, those of an Ancient and most perfect friendship. As for some Authors who have anticipated me, in printing of works upon the same subject,

Ep. 29.  
l. 7.



## *The Preface.*

**Subject** I hope I shall not be accused of ingratitude towards them. I have cited *Sigonius*, *Vossius*, and *Balthazar Bonifasius*, who wrote and censured before me the Greek and Latin Historians; and if I have taken something from them, as it could not be avoided, I do it not like a Thief or *Plagiary*, nor without adding something of my own, which a candid Reader might well expect from a Treatise succeeding so many others, but with this advantage at least, (as far as I know) to be the first of this nature, that has been seen in *French*.

I am not ignorant that my work is not of the number of those which please many people. They that prefer Fabulous Stories before true Narratives, and Romances before *Roman History*, will not find content here. I consider herein the excellent waies used by the *Ancients*, to instruct us faithfully and satisfactorily, in those passages of the world which were worthy to be recorded to posterity. And thoughts are herein displayed in such a manner, that without giving a precise judgment, as coming absolutely from me, I leave, without partiality, the liberty to all



*of the Author.*

All men, to contradict my opinions. But though many perhaps who are short-sighted, will yeild freely to those, who have better eyes than themselves, yet very few refer themselves to others in what concerns the Operations of the mind, wherein every one thinks he is clear sighted, and no body will acknowledg a Superior. Let not therefore what I expose here but as doubts grounded upon some appearances of truth, be taken for resolutions. My freinds know why I wrot them. And my comfort is whatever happens, the Labour was as an honest diversion to me. And if it be true, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* asserts, that our Souls are of the nature of Wells, from whence we must alwaies draw something, to make their waters more wholesome and pure; I do not repent of a trouble which has been so profitable to me, and which at least has kept my better part from corruption for want of exercise. To conclude, I should willingly use in favour of this writing, the same prayer to God, which *Apollonius* made to the Sun, when he undertook those long voyages, which *Philostratus* describes upon the creeds of *Damis*. Addressing him-  
self

*Lib. i.  
Strom.*



## *The Prefa.*

Self to the great Star, which he held to be the Visible God of Nature. he asked him the favour to find through the world, the most honest man. If my book were so happy to have no other to deal with, it would be no small advantage to it. But if its destiny is otherwise ordained, I must suffer patiently what cannot be avoided by those who expose any thing to the publick.



## The Greek Historians.

<b>H</b> <i>Erodotus.</i>	Pag 1.
<i>Thucydides.</i>	p. 15.
<i>Xenophon.</i>	p. 26.
<i>Polybius.</i>	p. 33.
<i>Diodorus Siculus.</i>	p. 46.
<i>Dionysius Halicarnassens.</i>	p. 58.
<i>Josephus.</i>	p. 69.
<i>Arrian.</i>	p. 83.
<i>Appian.</i>	p. 93.
<i>Dio or Dion Cassius.</i>	p. 104.
<i>Herodian.</i>	p. 116.
<i>Zosimus</i>	p. 126.
<i>Procopius.</i>	p. 135.
<i>Agathias.</i>	p. 156.

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## The Latin Historians.

<b>C</b> <i>Rispius Salustius.</i>	p. 165.
<i>Julius Cæsar.</i>	p. 180.
<i>Titus Livius.</i>	p. 188.
<i>Velleius</i>	



<i>Valerius Paternulus.</i>	P. 101.
<i>Quintus Curtius Rufus.</i>	P. 106.
<i>Cornelius Tacitus.</i>	P. 216.
<i>Lucius Annaeus Florus.</i>	P. 228.
<i>Suetonius.</i>	P. 234.
<i>Justin.</i>	P. 340.
<i>Ammianus Marcellinus.</i>	P. 248.

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**IMPRIMATUR.**

*March 29*  
*1878.*

**JOHN NICHOLAS**

**Vic. Can. Oxon.**

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( 1 )

REFLECTIONS  
UPON THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
HERODOTUS.

**A**LTHOUGH there have been many Greek Historians, who preceded *Herodotus*; he is allowed to be the most Ancient of those whose Works have been preserved to our time. *Pherecydes*, *Dionysius*, *Milesius*, *Hecateas*, *Xanthus Lydius*, *Charon of Lampsaenum*, *Hellanicus*, and some others are indeed mentioned to have written Histories before him; but their writings have been so long lost, that *Cicero*, in his Book *de Legibus*, acknowledged *Herodotus* to be the Father of History: and in another place, for his excellency, he stiled him the *Prince of Historians*.

L. 1. de  
leg. & 2.  
de Orat.

They reckon no less than one and twenty Ages from his to ours, for he lived about four Hundred and Fifty years before the Nativity of Christ: *Hellanicus*, and *Thucydides* were his contemporaries.



L. 15. C.  
25. No 8.  
Alt.

temporaries ; and they differed so little in Age, that , as *Aulus Gellius* reports , *Hellanicus* was but twelve years elder, than *Herodotus* , and *Thucydides* but Thirteen years younger. *Suidas*, *Photius*, and *Martellus*, relate a circumstance, which justifies this , in respect of the two latter : they write that *Herodotus* reading his History, in a great Olympick Assembly of all Greece, *Thucydides* , ( who was then but very young ) could not forbear weeping to hear him : which obliged *Herodotus* to tell his Father , that he esteem'd him very happy in having a Son, who shew'd, so early, such a great affection to the Muses.

L. de scr  
hist.

I do not affirm by this expression of *Herodotus*, that he then called the nine Books, he composed, by the names of the *Daughters of Parnassus*. The most probable opinion , and which *Lucian* seems to uphold, is, that those Books received their names from the learned , rather than the Author : and we find many other writings to have been dignified with the like Title, which did not deserve it so well as these. *Dion the Rhetorician* composed nine Books , which were called the *Nine Muses*, as we learn from *Dio- genes Laertius*. And the same Author assures us, that the obscure productions of *Heraclitus* his brain , of which *Socrates* made no difficulty to confess , that he hardly understood any thing were honored nevertheless with the name of the *Muses*. We read moreover in the *Library of Photius*,

12 Bion.  
Herac.



*Photius*, that one *Cephaleon* had compiled an Epitome of History, from *Ninus* to *Alexander the Great*, in nine Sections, divided also between the *Nine learned Sisters*, though in a different order from that of *Herodotus*. And that *Aurelius Opilius*, quoted somewhere by *Aulus Gellius*, who from a Philosopher, became a Rhetorician, and from a Rhetorician, a Grammarian (so degenerate he was) did not forbear to do the like, in a Treatise of his, consisting of Nine Books: And few that converse in Books are ignorant, that as the three Orations of *Demosthenes* his Competitor, had the names of the *Graces*, his *Nine Epistles* received those of the *Muses*, being the most illustrious, which could be given them.

*A Book so called.*

*Noël. Ait. l. 1. c. 25.*

*Suet. de ill. Gram. c. 6.*

*Photius Sect. 61. de Aesch.*

But from this inscription of the *Muses*, some have not forbore to accuse *Herodotus*, of being too great a Lover of Fables, and of having made a History, so Poetical, in favour of the *Companions of Apollo*, that there is seldom any truth found in it. This Faction reproaches him of all the strange things he has writ, and which have been most doubted of: and insinuates that those words of the *Latin Satyrist*, which tax Greek History:

——— & quicquid Græciâ mendax  
Andet in Historia, &c.

*Juven. Sat. 10.*

Were meant of him, and even *Casaubon* thought, that *Herodotus* his relations, had made his detractors invert, the word *delirare*, taking for an Etymologie, that which is perhaps, but a simple allusion.



## Herodotus.

But as he has had accusers, so he has not wanted persons to undertake his defence: *Aldus Manucius*, *Joachim Camerarius*, and *Henricus Stephanus* have writ Apologies for him: and the long voyages, as well up the North, as the South, and the East-Indies, which have been made in our daies, have very much justified his writings, to shew us that an infinite number of things, that he writ by the relation of others, and whereof he likewise doubted very much, are now found to be true. He declares in his *Melpomene*, on the Subject of those Phenicians, whom *King Necus* embarked in the red Sea, and who returned to *Agypt*, more than two years after, by the Pillars of *Hercules*; affirming, that they had in some of the Coasts of *Africk*, the Sun on the right hand, that he could not in any wise believe them; though it is now evident by common experience, that they could not return from the Erythrean Sea into the Mediterranean, (as they did,) without doubling the *Cape*, now called the *Cape of Good Hope*, and without having, in that place, the Sun on their right hand, and their shadow on their left (they being beyond the Tropick of Capricorn.) In the following book of *Terpsichore*, he makes those *Thracians* Lyers, who said, that the Country beyond the River *Ister*, was full of Bees, for this weak reason, that Bees cannot live in places so cold as those must needs be. Yet few are ignorant in our daies that *Novi scovy* is full of them, that they often peor  
wt,



whole Forrests, where these little Animals, some times by their labour, nourish Beares of an excessive magnitude, which inhabit therein. With the like fear of being mistaken, he doubted whether he should believe, that the *Isle of Chemnis* floated upon a Lake of *Egypt*, because he saw it not move, and that it was improbable that an Isle should swim upon water. But not to speak of the fabulous *Symplegades*, or *Cyaneas*, we read that both the *Plinies*, *Dionysius Halicarnassens*, *Theophrastus*, and *Seneca* have witnessed, that such are found in many places, and that they have seen some in their agitation. There are some near *St Omers*; in one of which the Arch Duke *Albertus*, and the *Infanta* of *Spain* his Datches, were entertained at a dinner. And it is no strange thing to the *Scotch*, to see one of this nature, in their *Lake of Loumond*, affording very good pasture ground. In fine, their existence is so certain, that the Lawyers *Paulus*, and *Labeo* disputed of the right of their Soil, the first being of opinion, that none had property in them. Who would not have taken for a Fable, that which the same *Herodotus* mentions, in another place, of certain *Thracian* Women, who contended among themselves, after the death of their Husband, who should have the honour to be kill'd upon his Grave, and buried with him? If the *Portuguese*, and other relations had not discovered, that it is a custome practised in all the Coast of the *Malabares*, and almost through all

In Faerfa

L. per. pa-  
rag. 2 dig.  
de acq. rer.  
dom.

Initio  
Terpse.



the East, for Women to cast themselves, of their own accord, and in emulation one of the other into the flaming funeral Piles of their deceased husbands.

But as we may perceive by these examples, that *Herodotus* did hardly ever expose for certain those things, which he did not perfectly know; though they were found true, long after the age in which he lived: so we must observe, that he has been very careful to condemn that which he judged to be manifestly false, when it appear'd to be against the ordinary course of Nature: even so in his *Thalia* he laughed at the pretended *Arimaspes*, who had but one Eye, and stole the *Gryphons* gold in the North. In *Melpomene*, the following Section, he does not more favourably deliver the Tale of the *Aigipodes*, or Goat-footed men: nor what he had read of the *Hyperboreans*, who sleep six Months of the Year: though this may probably have respect to the long Nights of those people, who live under the *Arctick Circle*, and who pass almost half the year, without seeing the Sun, whilst they are very near the Pole. When he writes a little after of one *Abaris*, who run over all the Earth, without eating, and with an Arrow, which served him instead of a *Pegasus*, he relates it as a Fable which was very famous in his time: but in the same Book, he protests against the common belief, that there were men, Neighbors to the *Scythians*, who made themselves Wolves once a year.



year, and resum'd after some daies, their human form : one cannot then say, that he has indifferently mingled truth with Fables, without distinguishing them ; nor that he was a Lye, though he often rehearsed the Fables of others, which the most exact Laws of History do not forbid : nay those very Laws oblige us to report the rumours which have been current, and the different opinions of men, ( as he will observed in his *Polyhimnia* on the Subject of the Argians ) by an Advertisement which may serve for all his whole History. Add to this, that *Herodotus* having been a most Religious observer of the Divine Worship, of which he made profession ( if one may say so of a Pagan ) there is little appearance, that he would charge his conscience with so foul a crime in an Historian, as false relation : for it appears that he respected so much the things he thought Divine, though he was an Idolater ; that he would never reveal those Misteries, which the religion of his time forbid to be published ; although an occasion presented it self in many places of his works. And one may observe in his *Urania*, how he makes all the successes of the Naval fight, wherein *Themistocles* overcame the Army of *Xerxes*, to agree with the Oracles which preceeded, whereof, he affirms, each prediction to have been punctually accomplished : therefore one, that was so great a friend to Altars, ought not to be suspected, of having betrayed truth in favour of impostures, which were no less infamous,



mous, or detested in his time than in ours.

Nevertheless though much may be said in his defence ; and though he may have been often slandered , by those whom ignorance , or envy have animated against him, we find two Authors of so great authority , who have censured him ( without speaking of *Harpocration* , who made a Book, purposely to defame him ) that one can scarcely pronounce him innocent.

*Plutarch* is the first, who testified a marvellous resentment, to see *Bæotia* his Country so ill used ( as he thought ) by *Herodotus* ; and the *Thebans* charged with an infamy, altogether insupportable, on the subject of the *Persian* War. This, he said, was the motive, which induced him, to compose that little Treatise of the *malignity of Herodotus*, where he accuses him, of having maliciously taxed the honour, not only of the *Thebans*, and *Corinthians* : but almost of all the *Greeks*, to oblige the *Medes* ; and raise the glory of his Country higher, in the person of *Artemisia* Queen of *Halicarnassus* , whose Heroick actions, in the battel of *Salamin*, he so exaggerates , that this Lady alone makes the greatest part of his Narration. *Plutarch* confesses that, it is one of the best writ, and most charming peices that can be read : but adds that in that agreeable sweetness , *Herodotus* makes men swallow the poyson of his detraction : and he compares the malignity , which he imputes to him , to *Cantharides* covered with *Roses* Some write that



## Herodotus.

that *Plutarch's* invective is accompanied with so much heat, and appears so full of animosity, that he seems to have all that ill nature himself, with which he endeavours to asperse his Adversary. But I have too much veneration for that worthy *Master of Trajan*, to be fully satisfied with such an answer: and, to say the truth, it is hard to consider, how *Herodotus* speaks of *Themistocles*, especially in his *Urania* (where he accuses him of Rapines, and Intelligence with the *Persians*) without having at least some suspicion of that, which *Plutarch* delivers for most certain.

*Plutarch  
was Tra-  
jan's Pre-  
ceptor*

The Second Authour of very great importance produced against *Herodotus*, is *Dion Chrysostomus*, who though he was not in particular the Instructor of an Emperour, does not perhaps deserve less respect than *Plutarch*, since besides that he was probably as deep in the affection of *Trajan*, as the other; by whose side *Suidas* witnesses, that he has been often seen in his Chariot: He pass'd his life in the instruction of mankind, Travelling through the world, where he pronounced, in the midst of the greatest Assemblies, those excellent Orations, which we have of his, to draw men from vices, and to imprint even in their hearts (if he could) a violent love of Vertue.

Hee in his Seaven and Thirtieth Oration, that he brings *Herodotus* to the *Corinthians*, to receive from them a recompence for the Greek Histories he had composed, and wherein they were extreamly concerned: He had not yet (saies  
*Dion*)



## *Herodotus.*

*Dion*) falsified them : and because the *Corinthians* declared that they would not purchase honour with money, he changed (as was evident) the relation, of what passed in the Naval Fight of *Salamin* accusing *Adimantus* General of the *Corinthians*, of flying in the beginning of the battel, and betraying by that means the common cause of all Greece. *Dion* adds a little after, that he could not allow of what *Herodotus* has left in writing upon that subject ; the publick Epitaphs, and Inscriptions of Sepulchers, erected by the consent of all Greece, in the Isle of *Salamin* bearing testimony against him ; and he recites part of the same Epigrams of *Symonides* the Poet, with which *Plutarch* used to convince *Herodotus* of prevarication, so that the Authority of his Philosophical profession, joyned with so many Monuments, which seem unrepachable, may reasonably at this day divide our minds in a difference, which those of the Ancients could never decide.

However after the loss of so many other Histories, it is certain that Antiquity has left us nothing more instructive, or ingenious, than the *Nine Musés* of *Herodotus* : they contain, as *Dionysius Halicarnassens* has well expressed, the most memorable passages in the world, during Two Hundred and Forty years, beginning from the Empire of *Cyrus*, first King of *Persia*, and continuing till *Xerxes* his Reign, in whose time he lived, as *Photius* and *Diodorus Siculus* inform us ; but the last was mistaken, when he writ that *Herodotus*

*Herodotus*



*Herodotus* his History extended from the taking of *Troy* by the Grecians, to the Reign of *Xerxes*; which would involve more than Seven Hundred Years. *Diodorus* his error proceeded, from our Historians speaking a little in his Preface, of that Fabulous time; and what was uncertainly reported in his life time of the Reliques of *Troy*: But there is no reason to make Reflections on so small a matter, and which does not properly belong to his History. But it may not be improper to insert a brief account of the Subject, of each of the Nine Books of our Historiographer, for the clearer illustration of the order of this History.

His First relateth the passages in the Kingdom of *Lydia*, from *Gyges* to *Cræsus*, and the minority of *Cyrus*, with the Commonwealth of *Athens*, and *Lacedemon*.

The Second describeth *Egypt*, and the successions of their Kings.

The Third, the History of *Cambyfes*, and the Election of *Darius Hystaspes*.

The Fourth, the unfortunate expeditions of *Darius* into *Scythia*.

The Fifth, the state of *Athens*, *Lacedemon*, and *Corinth*, in the time of *Darius Hystaspes*.

The Sixth, the Original of the *Lacedemonian* Kings; the Wars of *Darius* with the Greeks, and the battel of *Marathro*.

The Seaventh, the expedition of *Xerxes* into *reece*, with the battel of *Thermopile*.

The Eighth, the battel at *Salamis*,

The



## Herodotus.

The Ninth, the Battel at *Plataea*, by which the *Persians* were expelled *Greece*.

His Stile is rather sweet, large, cleare and easie, than high, concise, and pressing; as that of *Thucydides*. *Dionysius Halicarnassens* who compared these two Historians together. does almost alwaies allow the advantage to *Herodotus*: His Dialect (which was a fashion of speaking, peculiar to each Country where the Greek tongue was used) is altogether Ionick. And there is found so much resemblance between him and *Homer*, that the Sophister *Longinus* assures us in his Treatise of the *Height of Eloquence*, that none, but *Herodotus* perfectly imitated that *Prince of Poets*. and that he alone is (to use his term) *Ουνεκω'τατος*, so that it is usual to advise those, who will profit in the understanding of *Homer*, first to read *Herodotus*, to the end that the Prose of the latter, may prepare an easie access to the Poësie of the former, by the affinity of stile between them. *Samos*, was the place where *Herodotus* form'd himself to the Ionick Dialect, and compiled his History (before he retired with a Colony of *Athenians* into *Thurium*, a Citty of that part of *Italy*, which was then called *Great Greece*) for *Suidas* his opinion, conformable to this, is more followed, than that of *Nat.Hist. Pliny* who holds that *Herodotus* chose the time, 6.12.6.4. and place of his voluntary exile, to enterprise so great a Work: in which he is very erroneous; for he had compiled his History long before this retirement, as is recorded in the Chro-  
nic



nicles of *Eusebius*. It is true he was born in *Halicarnassus*, a Citty of that part of Greece, called *Doris*, a Region confining on the *Meleans*, and because his illustrious birth had engaged him in the expulsion of the Tyrant of his Citty, he retired into *Thurium*, where he died, according to the opinion of many ; there being even some, as *Plutarch* writes, that make this place, where he was buried, to be the place of his Nativity. It is not asserted by all, that the book of *Homer's* Life, which follows the *Ninth Muse*, was composed by *Herodotus* ; but whoever is the Authour of it, it is very ancient, and makes the labour of those men ridiculous, who even at this day, take great pains to pretend to something more certain, and considerable than is there writ, touching the Country of *Homer*. But this matter concerns not his History, which was happily preserved, notwithstanding the Epitomy of one *Theopompus*, whom *Suidas* mentions : for *Justin* is accused (though so great an Authour) of having been the cause of the loss of *Trogus Pompeius* his History : and the loss of part of the works of *Livy*, is imputed also to *Lucius Florus*, by the Epitomys which both have made, of these great works, which probably had been preserved, but for their abbreviations.



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# THUCYDIDES.

**A**S those that search for Springs, or conveyers of Water, whom the Latins call *Aquileges*, take it for a good Augury, if they see smoak arise out of certain grounds in the Morning; because it is one of the signes, which makes them hope to find therein some good, and abounding Springs: so they who understand best the nature of our Souls: rejoice when they observe, in our tenderest years, earnest desires of learning; and certain transports of ardour in the pursuit of Science, from whence they draw almost assured conjectures of the merit of our minds; and of their future excellence: upon such a conception was founded the predictions of *Hecodorus*, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, when he observ'd *Thucydides* moved even to tears by hearing him recite his rare Treatise  
of



## Thucydides.

of the *Muses*, in one of the most celebrated Assemblies of *Greece*. He took that for a sign of the growing greatness of his Genius: and as a Thorn pricks, as it grows, he judged that so extraordinary an emotion, in his tender Age, proceeding from so rare a Subject, would produce one day something memorable, and be follow'd by those agreeable watchings, and disquiets, which give Immortality to the learned of Mankind. *Thucydides* lived about Four hundred and Thirty years before the Incarnation of *Christ Anno Mundi* 3520. and as he was a person of illustrious Birth, and a great Fortune, added to the excellency of his Endowments, he had no temptation to betray truth, in what he was to deliver to posterity; and though some have censured the manner of his writing few ever questioned the truth of it.

He was rich, and of Royal extraction, but his opulency was augmented by his Marriage to a very rich Wife, a Daughter of a King of *Thrace*: and being very curious to have perfect intelligence of affairs; in order to the compiling of his History, he employed great sums of money to procure memorials competent to his design, not only from the *Athenians*, but the *Lacedemonians* also; that out of his collections from both, the great Transactions of that time might be the better, and more impartially discovered; as a Monument to instruct the Ages to come, for he intituleth his History ΚΤΗΜΑ 'ΕΣ' ΑΕΙ. Which signifies



fies a possession for Everlasting It comprehends the Peloponnesian War, which lasted one and Twenty years: for though some Writers make it to continue six years longer, yet others, and perhaps the more judicious observers do make, what follows in the succeeding six years after our *Historiographer* had ended his work, to be rather the consequences of that War, than truly a part of it: but what was deficient in the affairs of those years, was since supplied by *Theopompus*, and treated on by *Xenophon*, who begins his History, where *Thucydides* ended: There are some Critics, that do not believe his Eighth Book (according to the ordinary division) to have been written by him: some ascribe it to his Daughter: others to *Xenophon*, or *Theopompus*: but the more discerning part believe the contrary

When the *Peloponnesian* War began to break out, *Thucydides* conjectured truly that it would prove an argument worthy of his labour; and it no sooner began, than he began his History; pursuing the same not in that perfect manner, in which we now see it; but by way of Commentary, or plain Register of the actions and passages thereof, as from time to time they fell out, and came to his knowledg: but such a Commentary it was, as might (perhaps) deserve to be preferred before a History written by another: hence it is very probable, that the *Eighth Book* is left the same it was, when he first writ it, neither beautified with Orations, nor so well cemented

Hobbs in  
the life of  
Thucydides.



mented at the transitions, as the former seven Books are. And though he began to write as soon as ever the War was on foot ; yet he began not to perfect and polish the History, till after he was banished, and why he did not refine his last Book equal to the rest, is not known ; for he outlived the whole War as appears by what he relates in his first Book, where he saies, he lived in banishment Twenty years, after his charge at *Amphipolis*, which was in the Eighth year of that War, which in the whole, by the largest computation lasted but seven and twenty years.

It is hard to judge, whether the method and disposition of the History, or the Stile of it, be most to be praised ; since he hath in both shewed himself so great a Master, that none that have writ since, have exceeded him in either. As to the disposition, we shall in this place only observe, that in his first Book, he hath first, by way of proposition, derived the State of Greece from its Infancy, to the vigorous stature it then was at, when he began to write : and next declareth the causes both real, and pretended, of the War whereof he was to write : In the rest, in which he handleth the War it self, he followeth distinctly and purely the order of time throughout, relating what came to pass from year to year, and subdividing each year into a Summer, and a Winter. The grounds and motives of every action he sets down before the action it self, either narratively, or in the form of deliberative  
Orati-



Orations, in the persons of such, as from time to time bare sway in the Common Wealth. After the actions, when there is just occasion, he giveth his judgment of them, shewing by what means the success came, either to be furthered, or hindered.

His style is better discovered, by what the most excellent of the ancient Writers have expressed of it, than by my Pen. *Cicero*, in his second Book *de Oratore*, writes thus; *Thucydides*, (in my opinion) in the art of expression, exceeded all that went before; for he so abounds in matter, that the number of his sentences, doth almost equal the number of his words: and in them he is so apt, and so concise, that one cannot discern, whether his words do more illustrate his sentences, or his sentences, his words. As for his *Dialect*, it is purely *Attick*, and *Photius* judges, that as *Herodotus* should be a rule to such as would be perfect in the *Ionick* style: so *Thucydides* is the most excellent example, one can propose to himself, of a language purely *Attick*. He is reproached nevertheless, of having too much affected the reviving of ancient words, which were, even in his time, obsolete, and of having likewise taken a liberty to compose new ones; which has contributed much to render him sometimes so obscure, that even his contemporaries complained, that he was in some places scarce intelligible to his readers. But *Marcellinus*, who described his life, hath writ in his defence, that

C 2

he



*Thucydides.*

he affected obscurity, and rendered himself purposely not intelligible, that he might be only understood by the learned: yet this obscurity is not found in the narratives of things done, or in the description of places, or of battels, in all which he is most perspicuous, as *Plutarch* testifieth of him. In the Characters of mens humours, and manners, and applying them to affairs of consequence, it is almost impossible, not to be obscure, to ordinary capacities, in what words soever one deliver his mind. If therefore *Thucydides* in his Orations, or in the description of a Sedition, or other thing of that kind, be not easily understood; it is of those only that cannot penetrate into the nature of such things, and not from his intricacy of expression.

*Dionysius Halicarnassensis* observes, that *Herodotus* has great advantages over *Thucydides*, in the choice of the Subjects whereof they both treated, for the extent of the matter treated of by the *first*, is more diffused; and therefore seems more agreeable than that of the latter. His aim is to relate all the most memorable things, done by the *Greeks*, and *Barbarians*, during the space of two or three hundred years, which comprehends so many great actions, so various, and worthy to be known, that the relation of them cannot but be grateful to the reader. Whereas *Thucydides* hath shut himself up, almost to the space of seven and twenty years, which is not only a very narrow compass; but also the most unfortunate



he could chuse in all the Greek History : which contains few memorable actions, and those grievous to have been recorded to posterity. The same *Dionysius* finds much fault with the order, *Thucydides* uses in the distribution of his matter, representing, by half years, all that happened in divers places ; without mingling the successes of the Winter , with those of the Summer, so that he is found to leave things imperfect, to pass to others, which make the memory of the former lost , when he proceeds to continue the History to the following half year. And *Monsieur de la Mothe le Vayer*, our Author, improves this reflection of *Dionysius* ; certainly ( saies he ) there is nothing troubles the mind more than this interruption ; and he never reaps any profit from an Historical narration, who doth not end the things he treats of, till he has jumbled together an infinite number of actions. This is good ( continues he ) in nothing but Romances, where this artifice is purposely used to render their faults less apparent ; but truth loves to shew it self altogether and intire, which *Herodotus* knew how to practise incomparably better than any one. He never leaves an event, till he has represented it as far as it extends, and when he has fully contented the curiosity of his Reader, he passes so well to other successes ; or as the Rhetoricians say, uses such due and fit transitions , that the mind is carried on, not only without resistance, but even with pleasure and transport. But Mr.



## *Thucydides.*

*Hobbs*, who has more curiously than any, considered the History of *Thucydides*, very fully answers these objections : To the first he saies, that the principal and most necessary office of him that will write a History, is to take such an argument, as is both within his power well to handle, and profitable to posterity that shall read it : which he saies *Thucydides* hath done better than *Herodotus*. For *Herodotus* undertook to write of those things, of which it was impossible for him to know the truth : but *Thucydides* writeth of one War, the beginning and conclusion whereof he was certainly able to inform himself : and by propounding in his proem the miseries of it, he shews it was a great War, and worthy not to be conceal'd from posterity ; for men profit more by looking at adverse events, than on those that are prosperous.

To the second, namely the order of distribution, he saies, whoever shall read the History of *Thucydides* attentively, shall more distinctly conceive of every action this way, than the other : and the method is more natural ; for as much as his purpose being to write of one *Peloponnesian* War, he hath this way incorporated all the parts thereof into one body, so that there is unity in the whole ; and the several narrations are conceived only as parts of that. Whereas the other way he had but sowed together many little Histories, and left the *Peloponnesian* War ( which he took for his Subject in a manner unwritten ; for neither any part nor  
the



the whole , could justly have carried such a Title.

The same Mr *Hobbs* , who mentions many other objections of *Dionysius* against *Thucydides* , and fully and learnedly answers them , does arraign him for his censures , as done rather to purchase glory to himself in the action , than to instruct Mankind. For having first preferred *Herodotus* : his Country-man a *Halysarnassean* , before *Thucydides* , who was accounted , even by himself , the best of all Historians that ever writ : and then , conceiving that his own History might be thought , not inferior to that of *Herodotus* , by this computation , he saw the honour of the best *Historiographer* falling on himself , wherein he hath manifestly misreckoned in the opinion of all the learned.

*Thucydides* has the advantage , of having first thought upon the animation of History , that was before a body languishing ; which appears in his exact Orations , composed in all the three sorts of Oratory , the *demonstrative* , the *deliberative* , and the *Judicial* : *Herodotus* had attempted the same thing ; but he was content to use some *oblique* speeches , and those almost ever imperfect , never proceeding so far as *Thucydides* , who , in this way of writing , left nothing to be objected against by the severest Orators. And it is said that *Demosthenes* was so well pleased with his History , that he took the pains to transcribe it Eight times.

By



By the consent of all he has the glory of not mingling Fables, with his true Narrations. If he is constrained to say a word of *Tereus* King of *Thrace* : and *Progne* in his *Second Book* : or if in describing *Sicily*, in the beginning of the *Sixth*, he finds himself obliged to speak of the *Cyclops*, and *Læstrigones* ; as Ancient Inhabitants of a part thereof, it is, so lightly : that the Dogs of *Egypt* touch not so hastily the water of *Nilus* , whose Crocodiles they fear, as he passes nimbly over a fabulous circumstance, to avoid the least entrance of a lye into his writings. And yet he has not been so happy , to be without the reproach, of not having alwaies spoken truth : for *Josephus* affirms that he was taxed of having falsified his History in many places : but at the same time he accuses all the Grecians of imposture ; and if one observes the commendation, he gives him afterwards, of having been the most exact, and cautious of all his Country-men, in compiling a History ; it will appear, rather to proceed from the capricious humour of his Sect, than the demerit of an *Historiographer* : for as he was a Jew, who made it his business to discredit all Pagan History, he thought he ought to say something, to the prejudice of *Thucydides*, when he had spared none of the rest. I shall add here, that *Thucydides* did not onely lay down in his History all sorts of Orations , as we before observed ; but took the liberty to insert Dialogues, as that betwixt the *Athenian* Generals,



rals, and the Inhabitants of the Isle of *Metos*, which comprehends a great part of the fifth Book to the end. But those, that have an aversion to digressions, have no reason to hate them in this Authour, who touches them with great Art; as amongst others the conspiracy of *Harmodius*, and *Aristogiton*, in the sixth Book, which may justify many other excursions, or like Sal-lies, that are often censured with too little reason: and notwithstanding all his defects, the most judicious of the learned yield him the prize of Eloquence: and not one of the Ancients deny him the glory, of having seconded *Pindar*, in the Grandeur and Majesty of expression.

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REFLEC-



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# XENOPHON

*Ter  
Maximus:  
For Her-  
mes was  
so called,  
because he  
was a  
King, a  
Priest, and  
a Philoso-  
pher.*

**X**ENOPHON does not owe the fame, he has had so many Ages, to History alone; for Philosophy and Arms have contributed to it: and I believe that, for these three Qualifications, he may be as well termed \* *Trismegistus*, as *Hermes* the *Ægyptian*; since he is universally acknowledged, to be a very great Captain, Philosopher, and Historiographer. He has, common with *Cæsar*, the first and last Qualities; and they are not deceived, who find a third resemblance in their stile; Purity, Eloquence, and sweetness being equally natural to them both. They have each an agreeable manner of expression, without art, or affectation; though no art or affectation can come near it. The Sur-name of *Apes Attica*, and *Athenian Muse*, with which all the Ancients have dignified *Xenophon*,



phon, is not only a witness, of the beauty of his language, and of that hony-like sweetness, which the Graces seem to have poured on it, with their own hands, ( to speak like *Quintilian* ) but it is a particular mark of his Attick Dialect, wherein he excelled so much, that *Diogenes Laertius*, writing his life, gives no other reason for the bad intelligence, that was between him, and *Plato*, than the jealousy they conceived, - one against the other, upon that account. Yet *Marcellinus*, who attributes to *Thucydides*, in his Elogy, the height of Eloquence, gives the lowest rank to *Xenophon*, placing *Herodotus* between both : and *Dionysius Halicarnassens*, when he observes that *Xenophon* has often imitated *Herodotus*, adds, that the former was alwaies much inferiour to the latter.

*Xenophon-  
tis sermo  
est qui-  
dem mei-  
le dulcior.  
Tullius  
lib. de  
Clar. ora-  
toribus ad  
Brutum.  
Et eodem  
libro pau-  
lò inferi-  
us scribit,  
Xeno-  
phontis  
voce ma-  
gis quasi  
locutus fe-  
runt.*

But notwithstanding this, it is very considerable, that *Xenophon* was the first Philosopher, who applied himself to the compiling of a History, which, in what relates to the Græcian affairs, treats of the Transactions of eight and forty years ; and begins where *Thucydides* ended : shewing *Alcibiades* his return to his Country, whom *Thucydides*, in his last Book, left meditating upon that retreat. Nor is it a small glory to *Xenophon* ; but a proof of extraordinary Honesty, to have freely exposed, to the publick, the writings of *Thucydides*, which he might have suppress'd, or deliver'd as his own, if he would have been a Plagiary, and have ascribed, to himself, the works of



of another, which many others have done, and do daily practise Besides the continuation of the History begun by *Thucydides*, *Xenophon* has left us, that of the enterprize of young *Cyrus*, against his brother *Artaxerxes*, and the memorable retreat, of ten thousand Græcians, from the extremities of *Persia*, to their own Country; in which he had almost the whole honour, as well for his counsel, and discipline, as the excellency of his conduct.

*Cyrus*  
ille à *Xe-*  
*nophon-*  
te non  
ad *Histo-*  
*ria* per  
scriptus  
est, sed  
ad effigi-  
em! *Iusti*  
*Imperii*  
*Tullius*  
ad *Quin-*  
*tum*  
*Fratrem.*

What he writ, of the institution of the *Elder* \* *Cyrus*, is not an historical Treatise, but purely Moral, where he drew the figure of a great Prince, without confining himself to the truth, except of two or three events (*viz.*) the taking of *Babylon*; and the captivity of *Cræsus*. All the rest is feigned, and has nothing in it commendable, but the agreeableness of the Fable: as *Hermogenes* has well observed, on the subject of *Panthea's* death, who slew her self, with three Eunuchs, upon the body of her Husband *Abradatus*, in the seventh Book of that institution.

These compositions of *Xenophon*, of which we have spoken, are such, that as they may serve for a rule, to the first Ministers of State, in all the extent of Politicks (according to the excellent judgment, which *Dion Chrysostomus* makes of them) so likewise they are capable, to form great Captains, and give the world Generals and we have two notable examples of this, among the Romans: for they acknowledg, that their  
\* *Scipio*,



*Scipio*, surnamed *Africanus*, had, almost alwaies, *Xenophon's* works, in his hands, and that nothing, made *Lucullus* capable to oppose such a formidable enemy, as King *Mithridates*; but the reading the writings of *Xenophon*. Whereof *Lucullus* made so good use by Sea, (he who before had a very small insight, into the affairs of War) that he knew enough afterwards, to gain those famous Victories, which few of the learned are ignorant of, and whereby the most considerable Provinces of *Asia*, became tributary to the Romans.

*Xenophon* has writ upon divers Subjects; and it seems that, in many of them, there has been Emulation, between him and *Plato*, for they both composed, a defence of *Socrates*; and many other moral, and politick Treatises, according to the observation of *Diogenes*, in *Plato's* life, without any mentioning, one another; with reciprocal praise, whatsoever occasion presented it self, among so many Dialogues by them exposed, in the name of *Socrates* with his Disciples. Some will have it, that *Xenophon* represented, in very lively colours, the defects of one *Menon* a *Thes-salian*, in the end of the Second Book of *Cyrus* his expedition; for no other reason, than that he was a friend to *Plato*. But as for that other Book, *de Equivocis*, printed an Age ago, under the name of *Xenophon*, it is to be held, one of the impostures of *Annins Viterbins*. In like manner, some would have a certain supposititious History, of the Siege

*Cicer. 2.  
Tusc. que.*

\* *Libellus de Equivocis*  
Voss. de  
hist. grec.  
lib. 1.  
cap. 5.



## *Xenophon.*

Siege of *Troy*, to pass for current, under the name of one *Dictys Cretensis*, a Companion of *Idomeneus*, and of one *Dares* a Phrygian : and that it was translated, out of Greek, into Latin, by *Cornelius Nepos* ; when the Stile bewraies, that he never thought upon the work ; for it has nothing of that inimitable purity, and eloquence, which appears, in his lives of the *Greek Captains*, and in that of *Atticus*, writ by the same Author : such impostures are offensive, and cannot be too much detested, by the Lovers of truth. And yet some there are, so led away by their affection for Fables, that they feed themselves with such trifles, and so build upon those idle foundations ; as thereby to encourage others, to impose the like cheats upon Mankind. We have lately seen, the Itinerary of *Alexander Geraldin*, Bishop of *St. Dominick*, who pretends, to have found, over all *Æthiopia*, on this, and the other side of the Line, Roman Inscriptions, and Antiquities of such value ; that all others, which the rest of the *Earth* affords, would be despicable, if the worst of his were true : But it is observable, that none before, or after him, ever saw them : nor is there any Schollar, so unexperienced in this sort of reading, that cannot easily discover, the falsehood of his observations, so unlikely they are. Is it not a great impertinence to raise pillars, to testify the Conquest, and absolute dominion of the Romans, in places, where apparently,  
none



none of them ever set foot: and in direct opposition, to all we have from their own Histories? The same judgment is to be made, of those *Hetruscan* or *Tuscan* Antiquities, which we have of a fresher date, from one *Inghiramius*; whose impudence is unpardonable, for deceiving the world at such a rate. And perhaps it were not unfit to have punishments established, to signalise the infamy, of those that dare expose, to the publick, spiritual Aliments, so corrupted and Mortal as those are; for no poison operates with more violence, and bad effects upon the body, then errors and impostures, upon our minds, when we are infected with them.

An Author, of the last Age, accuses *Xenophon*, of having loved *Agésilas*, so passionately, that not only, in his Book which he writ of his praise, but likewise, in his History, he makes rash judgments in his favour, and extols his Victories, much more than the Laws of History will permit. But this Capriccio of an Italian, will be approved of by very few, because it arraigns the judgment of all Antiquity, which never spoke so much to the disadvantage of *Xenophon*. And *Tully*, who mentions his praise of that Prince, does not accuse him of any indecency in it.

As for his Stile, one may see, what *Hermogenes* writes of it, who commends it, especially for its sweetness, and simplicity, which he makes

*peron.  
Speroni  
dial. di  
Xenoph.*

*unus Xe-  
nophontis  
libellus,  
in eo rege  
laudando,  
facile  
omneis i-  
magines  
omnium,  
statuas-  
que supe-  
ravit.  
Tullii E-  
pistol.  
lib. 5.  
ad Q. fi-  
lium.*



*Xenophon.*

makes, one of the principal Ornaments of Language; and in this respect, he, by much, prefers *Xenophon*, to *Plato*.

He was, by Birth, an *Athenian*, and the Son, of one *Grillus*, and lived, about four hundred years, before the Nativity of *Christ*.

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REFLEC



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# POLYBIUS

**A**S *Xenophon* was the first Philosopher, that applied himself to write Histories, so *Polybius* has the advantage to have given us the most considerable one extant: and made it appear, more clearly, than any other Historiographer, that History is, as it were, the Metropolis of Philosophy; to use the terms of the Historian, of whom we shall write, in the Chapter following. But what is said of *Polybius*, might be more reasonably admitted, if the whole body of his works, were now extant, of which only the least part remains; since of forty Books, which he composed, there are, but the five first, entire; with the Epitomy of the following twelve, which is continued, to the beginning of the Eighteenth. Many are of opinion, that this Epitomy was writ, by the great asser-

*Diod. Sic.  
initio lib.  
I.*



tour of Roman Liberty, *Marcus Brutus*, because  
 it is known, that he delighted, in nothing, so  
 much as in reading History, being a man so  
 difficult to please, that *Cicero's* works did not af-  
 fect him, and therefore he employed his lea-  
 sure, in Epitomising the History of *Polybius*,  
 finding therein, besides that instruction where-  
 with it abounded, the consolation, he needed,  
 in the last, and most unfortunate daies of his  
 life. The Subject of this History, were all the  
 most considerable actions in the world, from  
 the beginning of the second Punick War, to the  
 end of that, which terminated the differences, of  
 the Romans, with the Macedonian Kings, by the  
 utter ruine of their Monarchy. This includes  
 the space of Three and Fifty years, the events  
 of which, *Polybius* shewed, in the last Eight and  
 Thirty Books: for the Two first, are not so much  
 of the body of his History, as they serve for a  
 preparative, in a summary narration, of the taking  
 of *Rome*, by the *Gauls*, under the conduct of  
*Brennus*, and of that which followed, until the  
 first year, of the second War, against the *Car-  
 thaginians*. But though the affairs, of the Ro-  
 man Empire, were much more exactly describ-  
 ed by him, than the rest of those, that writ of  
 that Subject; because his chief aim was to omit  
 nothing, that might give a perfect information  
 of them: yet he neglected not also to represent  
 the concerns, of all the other powers of the Uni-  
 verse, unfolding the interests, of the Kings of  
*Syria*



*Syria*, *Egypt*, *Macedon*, *Pontus*, *Cappadocia*, and *Perſia*, with thoſe of all the different Dynaſties, which were then in Greece. And therefore he gave, the name of Catholick or Universal, to his Hiſtory, as informing us of the deſtinies of all the Nations of the Earth: there being ſcarce any at that time which had not ſome difference with, or dependance on the Romans. He received, at his Birth, great gifts from Nature, which favoured his enterpriſe and that chance of fortune, which made him come to Rome, was no ſmall advantage to him; ſince he is indebted to it, not only for the beſt part of his learning, but the important friendſhip, he contracted with *Scipio*, and *Lelins*, which contributed much to the celebration of his Hiſtory, to poſterity. But the pains, he took in the acquiſition of all, that could put him in a capacity of writing it well, and labouring for eternity, ſeems worthy to be conſidered. He thought it was required of a good Hiſtoriographer, to have ſeen the beſt part of thoſe things he related, according to the Etymologie of the name, given by the Grecians, to that profeſſion. He knew the errors, which the ignorance of places, made *Timeas* commit: for he reproached him, in his Twelfth Book, that having truſted, to the reports of others, and not travelled himſelf, he might be proved guilty of many errors. And poſſibly having learned the Latin Tongue, with great care, he remembered the expreſſions,

*A. Gellius*  
*us Noct.*  
*Att. l. 5.*  
*c. 18*



which *Plautus* ( who lived an Age before him ) makes *Messenio* say to *Menechmus*, that unless they had a design to write a History, he thought, they had seen enough of the World

— *Quin nos hinc domum*

*Redimus, nisi si Historiam scripturi sumus.*

So much they, at that time, thought travel necessary to an Historiographer, who could make no exact description, nor be confident of the authority of his memorials, from whatsoever place he should have them, if he had not rectified them, by his own sight, viewing himself the Countries, he intended to treat of. *Polybius* resolved therefore, to know exactly many places, as well of *Europe*, as *Asia*, and *Africa*; whether he went purposely, to be assured of what he might write of them. And he used *Scipio's* Authority, to procure Vessels, fit to Sail on the Atlantick Ocean, judging that, what he should there observe might prove useful to his intentions. It is certain, that he passed the Alps, and one part of the Gaules, to represent truly *Hannibals* passage into *Italy*, and fearing to omit the least circumstance, of the same *Scipio's* actions, he travelled all over Spain, and stopt particularly at new *Carthage*, that he might carefully study the situation of it. But now we are mentioning, the famous Subverter of Carthage, *Scipio Æmilianus* Grand Son, by adoption, of *Scipio Africanus* ( who vanquished *Hannibal*, after he had compelled him to leave *Italy* ) it may not be improper



improper to insert, what *Polybius* himself left in writing, concerning the strict friendship, which was between them two. I shall borrow the discourse of it, from a fragment of his one and thirtieth Book, taken from the Collections, of *Constantinus Porphyrogenetus*, under the Title, of Vice, and Vertue; he tells us in that place, that this reciprocal affection had its rise, from the pleasure they took together, to talk of books, and communicate them, one to another. This was the reason why *Scipio* employed all his own, and his Brother *Fabius* his credit, to obtain leave for *Polybius*, to live at *Rome*, when the other Grecians (which were sent for, as well as he, to remain as Hostages) were distributed through all the rest of the Cities in *Italy*. One day, when they had Dined all Three together, *Scipio*, being alone with *Polybius*, after dinner (blushing a little) complained to him, that he alwaies addressed his speech at Table to his Brother. Perhaps, said he, you do it, because you see me less active than he; and that I am careless to seek fame by publick pleading, in which the Youth of this City employ their time, and by this measure, you, and many others of my friends, may conceive amiss of me, which will be no small trouble to me. *Polybius* soon perceived the commendable jealousy of *Scipio*, who was not full Eighteen years old, and assuring him, of the esteem he had of his person, as one most worthy to bear the many illustrious names, which his

*A custom in use amongst the greatest of the Roman Nobility.*



Predecessors had left him, he excused himself, in respect of *Fabius*, to whom, he said, being the eldest, civility often required him to direct his discourse, which he praised him not to apprehend amiss in him: and after this little expostulation, which was followed by a mutual protestation of good will, *Scipio* never received any one, into such a strict or Cordial familiarity, *Lelius* excepted, as he did *Polybius*.

I thought the circumstances of this conference, between Two such great men, so much the more considerable, besides that thereby we make some discovery of their Genius, which alwaies appears, more in a private discourse, than in any the most serious actions, that I may, by this instance, refute the impertinence of a modern Writer, who had the impudence, to make many injurious reflections on *Polybius*. It is one *Sebastian Mac-*  
*cins*, that treating of History, and declaiming against digressions, took occasion, to condemn those of *Salust* and *Polybius*, indecently calling them, base conditioned Fellows, and men, sprung out of the dregs of the People. And the more to defame the latter, he particularly adds, that he was a meer pedant, given to *Scipio*, to serve him, in the Quality of a Preceptor. But this is too malicious, to pass without an answer, on *Polybius* his account, deferring, what may be said in behalf of *Salust*, till we treat of the Latin Historians. None that converse with Books can be ignorant, that *Polybius* was of *Megalopolis*,  
 Ci



City in *Arcadia* : and that he was Son, of *Ly-cortas*, General of the *Achaians*, which was the most puissant Republick then in *Greece*. That great State sent them, both Father and Son, in Quality of Ambassadors, to King *Ptolomeus* surnamed *Epiphanes*; and the Son had afterwards the same Honour, when he was deputed, to go to the Roman Consul, which made War upon King *Persens* in *Thessaly*. His Birth then was very illustrious, contrary to what was said, by *Mac-cius*, and it is not probable, that a person, so exercised in the affairs of State, and accustomed to great employments, as *Polybius* was, should be known to *Scipio*, for no other purpose, than to instruct him in the Rudiments of Grammar. Nor has any, but this detractor, had so lewd an imagination of him. All the Ancients, who writ of *Polybius*, have done it, with great commendations, and many of them esteemed *Scipio*, for nothing more, than his choice of so faithful a Counsellour, and his carrying him with him, in all his military expeditions. *Cato* reproached a Roman Consul, for having had a Poet, amongst those of his train, when he went to visit a Province, out of *Italy*. I will not say, he shewed in that too much of the Philosophical severity, of which he made profession; though it is said, that he would himself, sometimes, quit that humour, when he feasted with his friends: but it is certain, that no man ever found fault, with the choice, *Scipio* made, of the person of *Polybius*, to accom-

pany

*cicero. l. i.  
lusc. que.*



pany him, for he was neither considered as a Poet, nor meer Grammarian, if to be such may be accounted faults, the fragment we quoted is express enough, to assure us of the contrary, in pursuance indeed of the discourse he used, to please *Scipio*, he added, that neither his Brother *Fabius*, nor he, should ever want instructors, in what related to letters, which he might decently enough say, considering the great number of learned men, which came daily to *Rome*, from all parts of *Greece*: and in further compliance with him, that no man should be more zealous, or industrious, than he, to improve his thoughts to things worthy of his Birth, and what might be expected from a successor of the *Scipio's* and *Æmylii*. After this conference, saies my Author, *Polybius* was hardly ever out of *Scipio's* company, who communicated to him his most important affairs, and made use of his Counsel, in all the occurrences of the great employments he had. But who can be safe from the insolence of detractors, when there will be found, some that vilifie this great Historian, though he was honored, in Inscriptions and Statues, by his Country-men, who best knew his Quality (as may be seen in *Pausanias*) to acknowledge thereby, the esteem they had of his benefits and rare merit.

There might perhaps be more reason, to lay to his charge, as some have done, his not having been religious enough, in his devotion to  
the

stanti-  
nus Por-  
phyrogen-  
etus ut  
supra.

in Arcad.



the Deity ; for though he speaks, in many places , very advantagiously of the worship of the Gods ; as when he attributes all the glory of *Arcadia* his Country , to the great care they had, to serve the Altars : and elsewhere professes , that he abhors the outrageousness of War , that causes the destruction of Temples , which he makes to be a most capital crime. Yet he declares so formally, in another place, against the Divinity, and all those, which in his time, held the opinion, of the pains of Hell, that it appears evidently, he believed nothing thereof. And about the end of his Sixth Book, he observes, that superstition, which was accounted a vice by all other Nations, past for a Vertue, among the Romans. If one could, saies he, compose a Republick, only of wise and vertuous men ; all those fabulous opinions, of Gods, and Hell, would be altogether superfluous. But since there is no State, where the people are not ( as we see them ) subject, to all sorts of irregularities, and evil actions, one must, to bridle them, make use of those imaginary fears, that our Religion imprints, and the panick terrors of the other world, which the Ancients have so prudently introduced to this end that they cannot be contradicted now by any but rash persons , or those who are not well in their Wits. Let them who defend *Polybius* in every thing ( as *Casaubon* has done ) say what they please, on his behalf, they can never make him pass ( after so formal a Declaration )  
for



for a man, very zealous in the Religion of his time. They would, perhaps, do him better service, to speak of him, as of a Soul, illuminated by Heaven, in the darkness of Paganism: and who believing, but in one *Principle*, or only Deity, laughed at all those, which the Idolatry then reigning, made to be adored, as well as at the *Elysian Fields*, *Cerberus*, and *Rhadamantus*, which were represented to those Profelites. Thus, in my opinion, he may be best acquitted (if it be possible) of the crime of impiety, putting him, in the rank of *Heracitus*, and *Socrates*, whom, St. *Justin* more charitably, than perhaps truly, maintains to be Christians, long before Christianity.

Lib. 5. Ep. In Macr. Besides the Forty Books of his Universal History, it is credible, by one of the Letters, which *Cicero* writ to *Lucceius*, that he made a particular Treatise of the War of *Numantia*. His great Age furnished him with the convenience to write much, since we understand, from *Lucian*, that he passed the great Climacterical year, and died not, till he was Eighty two years old, about Two Hundred and Thirty years, before *Christ*. He confesses himself, that the advice of *Lelius*, which he often required in their ordinary conferences, and the memorials, which that great person furnished him withal, were very advantageous to him. But, as to his manner of writing, the Ancients agree not, that he ought to be accounted eloquent. *Dionysius Halicarnassens*, the most strict  
and



and austere c itick among them, names him impolite, and reproaches him with negligence, both in the choice of words, and structure or composition of his periods. His excellency is nevertheless such, in all other things, that one ought to think, that he neglected words, as of little importance, to tie himself entirely, to things more serious. *Titus Livius* is not thought very ingenious, to give him only the commendation, of a Writer not to be despised, since whole books of his, are seen transcribed, word for word, in his *Decades*. It is sure, we have no Historian, of whom one may learn more, in matter of government, and civil prudence, than of *Polybius*. He does not think a simple narration sufficient, but moves pathetically; and instructs no less like a Philosopher, than an Historian. *Patritius* is mistaken, to reprehend him for that method of writing, without considering the affinity, which has alwaies been, between History, and Philosophy, which is such, that the former, has been often defined to be, a Philosophy filled with examples. Perhaps, a meer Commentator is condemnable, when he acts the Philosopher too much, and stretches so far that way; which cannot be said of one, that undertakes to write a just History. We learn from *Suidas*, that one *Scylax* (whom he confounds, with a certain Mathematician of that name) made an invective against *Polybius*, which was not, possibly, more reasonable, than the censure of the forementioned *Patritius*.

*Vossius de  
hist. græcis  
c. 19.*



*ius* I cannot also be reconciled to those, who are scandalised, that he called, one of the Capes or Promontories of *Sicily*, *Pelorus*, long before that name was imposed on it. For, treating of the first Punick War, he calls the place, *Pelorus*, where that innocent *Pilot* was interred, whom *Hannibal* slew, long after, so unjustly, and which gave, it's name of *Pelorus*, to the Promontory now called *Capo di Faro* (if this Etymologie, which is combated by the learned *Cluverius*, may be received.) However it is a way of speaking, which the Compilers of the holy Scriptures practised when it was necessary to make a thing better understood. He is, it may be, not excusable, for having, contrary to the truth of History, flatter'd his *Scipio*, to that degree, as to make him exercise a memorable example of continency, towards the fair Spanish Captive, with whom nevertheless he was so taken, that he could never resolve to restore her *Valerius Antias* is he, who charges him with this crime, in *Aulus Gellius*; which seems to me so much the more strange; because *Polybius* compared History (which has not truth for a Guide) to an Animal, whose Eies are put out, and he pretended, after *Timæus*, to render truth, as essential to an History, as rectitude to a Rule; in which resemblance, he may be reasonably contradicted, - as I remember, I have done in another work. The great affection, he had for *Scipio*, puts me in mind of the excellent counsel he gave him, that whensoever he went abroad

he

L. 6. No 67.  
Att. c. 8.  
Lib. 1.  
Hist.

Tr. of Hist.  
upon Sand.



he should never return to his House, till he had first endeavoured, to gain the friendship of some particular person, by obliging him all the waies, that lay in his power. And although this was a very useful advice, to him that received it, I mention it, in this place, to shew the great humanity, which appeared, in him that gave it. We are indebted, to *Pope Nicolas the Fifth*, that great friend of the Muses, and restorer of letters, for the first publication of the Works of *Polybius*, at that time, when the Turks invaded *Constantinople*, though they are much augmented since in the latter Editions.

REFLEC-



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

### HISTORY

#### OF

# DIODORUS

## SICULUS.

**C**LUVERIUS, one of the most exact of our modern Geographers, teaches us that *Agyrium* ( of which *Diodorus Siculus* speaks, as of the place of his birth ) is now called *San Filippo d' Agyrone*. It is a great honor to this little place, to have given to its Isle such a person, without whom no body would know its Antiquity; nor many things which render it very considerable. He saies in the beginning of his History ( which stands instead of a preface to it ) that he was no less than Thirty years in writing it, in the Capital City of the World, where he gathered Notions, which he could not have elsewhere; confessing that the  
vast



vastness of the Roman Empire had extreamly favoured his design. But nevertheless he did not omit to go himself, through the greatest part, of the Provinces of *Europe*, and *Asia*: where he was in many dangers, and endured extream labour, that he might not commit the faults, which he had remarked (as he saies) in those, who had meddled to speak of places, where they had never been. It does not appear in that place, that he saw *Affrick*, and yet we read in the second Section of his *first Book*, that he travelled to *Ægypt*, in the raign of that *Ptolomy*, who is distinguished from the rest, by the Surname of new *Bacchus*, or *Dionysius*, and who was the first Husband of his Sister *Cleopatra*: whereby one may note, that the best part of *Ægypt* was formerly, of *Asia*, when the Geographers divided it, from *Affrica*, rather by the *Nile*, than the *Red Sea*.

It is not without reason, that *Diodorus* gave his work, the name of an *Historical Library*, since, when it was intire, it had united in one, according to the order of times, all that which other Historians have writ separately: for he had comprised in Forty Books, whereof we have but Fifteen remaining, the most remarkable passages in the World, during the space of Eleven Hundred and Eight and Thirty years, without reckoning, what was comprehended, in his *six first books* of the more fabulous times, that is to say, of all which had preceded the War of *Troy*. His  
History



History is then truly, Oecumenical or Universal, and we ought, so much the more, to bewail what is wanting, since, after the loss of *Berosus*, *Theopompus*, *Ephorus*, *Philistus*, *Callisthenes*, *Tizmans*, and such other great Authors, the reading of *Diodorus* alone, repaired in some manner our damage, having compiled, and digested all their works in his *Library*. Of the *Six first Books* before mentioned, the *last* is no where to be found, although *Raphael Volaterranus*, and some others, quote it sometimes, as if we had it yet. But if one observes exactly, it will be found, that they misreckon in their account; and that what they report to be in the *Sixth*, is in the precedent *Book*, which *Diodorus* names, the *Insular*, and which is only the *Fifth*. The error proceeds from the first impression, which was all *Latin*, and wherein *Poggins Florentinus*, Author of the translation, which *Pope Nicolaus Quintus* desired of him, made Two Books of the *first*, because *Diodorus* divided it into Two different Sections: By this means the *second* became the *Third*; and consequently that which was but the *fifth*, was taken for the *sixth*, as if we had lost no more, of the fabulous Antiquities of *Greece*, contained in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth book, than of those of the *Barbarians*, which we have intire, in the *first*, *second*, and *third*.

The Greeks called all Nations, but themselves, by that name.

The remainder of *Diodorus* his *Library* consists in Two parts, which are squared by Two Epochies of



of note. The *first* reaches from the destruction of *Troy*, to the death of *Alexander the Great*: for the understanding whereof, and all which happened in the world during that time, he employed *Eleven whole Books*, which are from the *Sixth* to the beginning of the *Eighteenth*; of this number the four first are lost, but we have the other *Seven* remaining. The *Second Epoehe* stretches from the time in which the first ended, to that of the Conquests of *Julius Caesar* in *Gallia*; when he made *England*, and the *Brittish Ocean*, the limits of the *Roman Empire*, on the North side. The marvellous successes of all this interval, were described in *Three and Twenty Books*; but there remains no more, than the *Eighteenth*, the *Nineteenth*, and the *Twentieth*, to our time: the others unto the *Fortieth* being all lost, except some small fragments, taken from *Eusebius*, *Photius*, and some others, who used *Diodorus* his Text, in their works. *Henricus Stephanus* affirms, out of a Letter communicated to him by Mr *Lazaro Baif*, that all the works of *Diodorus* are found entire, in some corner of *Sicily*. I confess I would willingly go, almost to the end of the World, if I thought to find there so great a Treasure. And I shall envy those, that will come after us, this important discovery, if it shall be made, when we shall be no more, and that instead of *Fifteen Books* only, which we now enjoy, they shall possess the whole *Forty*



Since *Diodorus* speaks of *Julius Caesar*, which he does in more than one place, and alwaies with an attribute of some *Divinity*, as it is the custome of the *Pagans*, he cannot be more Ancient than he; which is about Forty Eight years, before the *Nativity of Christ*. But when *Eusebius* writes in his *Chronicles*, that *Diodorus Siculus* lived under this *Emperour*, it seems tha he limits the life of the former, with the reign of the latter. Yet *Suidas* prolongs his daies even to *Augustus*. And *Scaliger* very well observes, in his animadversions upon *Eusebius*, that *Diodorus* must needs have lived to a very great Age, and that he was alive at least half the Reign of *Augustus*, since he mentions, on the subject of the *Olympiads*, the Romans *Bissextil* year, which name was not used, before the *Fasts*, and *Calendar* were corrected, which was done by *Octavius Augustus*, to make the work of his *Predecessor* more perfect. We have at this time, in the last impression of *Diodorus*, a Fragment of his *Seven and Thirtieth Book*, which would remove all this difficulty, if it were true: for in it is seen the death of *Caesar*, revenged by the *Triumvirat*, on *Brutus*, and *Cassius*, with the fall of *Anthony*, and the establishing of *Augustus* in the Empire, for all his life. This would infer that *Diodorus* lived longer, than *Augustus*. But that collection, which is somewhat larger in *Photius*, shews by those whom he calls *Illustrious*, by a Title unknown in the Age of *Diodorus*, that another

*Ad annum*  
*Num.*  
1567.



another was the Author of it, or that his Text has received additions from some one, who lived long after his time, whence consequently we cannot make any certain conclusion.

The time of these Two Emperors *Cæsar* and *Augustus*, is indeed the Age of the best *Latin*, as all, who understand it, agree: but not so of *Greek*; because, even in their time, the *Athenian* Eloquence was already transferred to *Rome*, and that faculty, which delights in command, had quitted the vanquished, to follow the fortune of the victorious, taking their habit, and Language. It is no wonder then, that *Diodorus* is not equal, in this respect, to *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, or *Xenophon*, being a *Sicilian* onely, and having, added to that, the disadvantage to write in such a season. *Photius* nevertheless does not forbear to praise his Stile, as being very clear, unaffected, and very proper for his Subject, which is History. It is (saies he) neither too *Attick*, nor too full of Ancient words. His manner of writing has a just mediocrity, between the most high Stile, and the other, which the School calls humble and creeping, for its lowness, which is alwaies avoided by *Diodorus*. There is certainly more reason to credit, that learned *Patriarch* of *Constantinople*, who was a most exact critick in his Tongue, than *John Bodin*, who though he understood *Greek* much less, ventures to give a quite contrary judgment, and reprehend the words, as well as the Stile of *Diodorus*, as if a stranger,

*Photius*  
*Meib.*  
*hist. c. 5.*



at this day, could say any thing worthy consideration, in that matter, after what has been said by the Ancients, and contrary to the opinion of those, to whom Greek was a maternal language

*g. disc. de  
trad.*

Nor is there more heed to be taken, to the investive of *Lodovicus Vives*, the *Spaniard*, against *Diodorus*, than to that of *Bodin*, the *French man*. The last blames even the expressions; and words: the first arraigns the body of his History, and the things whereof his narration is composed. If we believe *Vives*, there is nothing more vain, than the *Historical Library*, of our *Sicilian*; and *Pliny* was much to blame, in his opinion, to say in his *Preface*, that *Diodorus*, was the first of the Greeks, who spoke seriously, and abstained from writing trifles, I know, the Authority of this accuser, is not small, he being very learned, in respect of his Age, and one of the ornaments of his Country: neither am I ignorant that others besides him, as *Pighius*, and *Stegonius*, complained of the faults, which *Diodorus* committed in Chronologie, for having followed bad computations. And I consider that *Vive* having commented, on the Books of St *Augustin*, *de Civitate Dei*, remarked in them, how that great Doctor of the Church, laughed at the *Egyptians*, who said, that they had Records, in their Books, a hundred thousand years old, to which *Diodorus* his Text is not repugnant: nay he goes farther than this, when he makes mention, of the great knowledg of Heavenly things, which the *Chaldeans* had acquired,

*Lib. 18.  
Cap. 40.*

*Lib. 2.*



acquired, who bragged that they had made observations upon them, for the space of four hundred seventy and two thousand years before the conquests, of *Alexander the Great in Asia*. He had already said, that the *Egyptians* reckoned, some Ten, and others of them, Three and twenty thousand years, from *Isis*, and *Osiris*, to the same *Alexander*: and that their first Kings, who were Gods, did each of them Reign, no less than Twelve Hundred years. This is doubtless that account, which *Vives* could not suffer, and which provoked him, to declare so highly, against *Diodorus*, who will not allow him, to have been praised by *Pliny*, for any other thing, than the Title of his History, which is indeed, neither improper, nor ridiculous, as many of those were, which the other Grecians ordinarily gave to their Books.

Lib. 1

But if that may be said to be the onely occasion, which moved *Pliny*, to pronounce this fair Elogy, of our *Historia* (viz.) *Primus apud Græcos desciit nugari Diodorus*, yet it was alwaies favourably interpreted to extend to his whole composition, and it is a kind of injustice to affirm, as *Vives* did, that there is nothing more vain, nor less solid, than his History. As for the Egyptian Ephemerides, and the Astronomical calculations, of the *Chaldeans*, they are inserted, onely to shew what was the common belief of those people, ~~not~~ arguing, that he gave any credit to them. He is so far from it, that he says expressly, in his



Second Book, that he cannot possibly acquiesce to what the *Colledge of Chaldeans* had determined, of the long space of time, which preceded the Victories of *Alexander*. I am so far from condemning the Fables, and excellent Mythology, in the *Five first Books of Diodorus*, that in my opinion, we have nothing more pretious, in all that remains of Antiquity: for besides that Fables may be told seriously, and that *Plato's Timæus*, with several other works of very great consideration, should be rejected, if they were absolutely unnecessary, it is to be said of these, that they teach us, the whole Theology of the Idolaters. And if it were lawful, to give a Holy name, to a profane thing, I might call the *Five* forementioned *Books*, the *Bible of Paganism*, since they teach us at the first sight, what the *Gentiles* believed of Eternity, and the Creation of the World: and the birth of the first men, is therein afterwards described, according to the pure Light of Nature; So that they represent to us so well, all the Theogony of the Egyptians, whence that of the Greeks drew its Original, that without *Diodorus*, we should be ignorant, of what is most curious, in that sort of knowledge. Nevertheless he is not the first Infidel, that began his History, with the Original of all things, as well as *Moses*, with the Creation of the World. For he himself teaches us, in the *fifth Book*, of his *Bibliotheca*, that, *Anaximenes of Lampsacum*, had not writ the first of any (as some have.

The name,  
or inscription  
of his  
History.



have ill translated it ) but the first History of Greece ; because he took it from the birth of the Gods, and the infamy of Mankind ( to speak like him ) continuing it to the famous battel of *Mantineia* , and the glorious death of *Epaminondas* : however since our evil destiny would not permit the others labours to come to us ; I believe we cannot, at this day, have too great an esteem for those of *Diodorus* which it hath not envied us , nor too much retort the injurious censure of *Vives*, and such like.

But in this we do no more, than follow, the opinion of most men of letters, not onely *Ethicks*, but even *Christians* also. *Justin Martyr* *Paræn. ad Gr.* calls *Diodorus*, in several places, the most renowned, and esteemed, of all the Greek Historians : and proves by his writings, the excellence and Antiquity of the *Great Law giver* of the *Hebrems*, and when he would insinuate, that *Homer* had learned, in *Egypt*, the most refined things, he put into his Poesy, he uses for it the Authority of *Diodorus*, whom he does not name without praise. And *Crisostomus* goes beyond *Justin Martyr*, both in Titles of Honour, and in citations of passages, drawn from our *Historian*, with which he fills, all the books of his *Evangelical preparation*. And when he treats, of the beginning of the world, and of what the Ancients believed, of the Sun, and Moon, and of the customs which the *Carthaginians* had, to Sacrifice men, and of infinite other Subjects, which fall  
into



into his principal design, he alwaies alledges *Diodorus*, but he does it chiefly, when he examines the Theology of the *Ægyptians*, in his *Second Book*, where he very much extols the fame of him: he calls him a most illustrious Writer, most exact in his Narrations, and one esteem'd by all learned men for his profound doctrine, and he adds, that there is no Grecian, who is not desirous to read him, by a common approbation, and preference to the rest of their Authors. But when he insists in his *Tenth Book* of the same work, that Greece had received, from the hands of those it esteemed barbarous, and particularly from the Jews, all the Sciences and learning, for which it had so great a value; it is in that he attributes the greatest Honour to him. For after having used the Testimonies of *St Clement*, *Porphyrin*, *Plato*, *Democritus*, *Heraclitus*, *Josephus*, and such like Authors, of the first Classe, he finishes his proof with a Quotation, out of the first Book of that incomparable History: *to the end (saies he) that the Authority of Diodorus, may be as a Seal, to all my demonstration.* To say the truth, he has a marvellous advantage given him by *Eusebius*, to be cited, and put expressly after the rest, to shew how much he is esteemed by him: in the same manner, as Architects place that Stone last, which is called the Key of the Arch, and which conduces no less to the solidity, than the ornament of the whole Edifice.

This



This is that, which I purposed to add to the suffrages of *Pliny*, and *Photius*, in favour of our *Historian*, for fear that the ill terms, which *Bodin*, and *Vives*, used against him, should be prejudicial to his fame. If I had reason to blame him, it should be much rather, for the great superstition, in which he abounds, in all his writings, as well as *Titus Livius*, amongst the *Latins*, than for his bad Greek, or for having handled his subject ill, whereof those indecent Criticks accuse him, there being no reason to diminish his reputation, in that regard.

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REFLEC-



REFLECTIONS  
UPON THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
DIONYSIUS  
HALICARNASSEUS.

**I**F *Dionysius Halicarnassens* had not said himself, in the beginning of his History, that he lived in the *Emperour Augustus* his time (in whose Reign our *Saviour* was born) *Strabo* would teach it us, in the *Fourteenth Book* of his *Geography*, where speaking of the City of *Halicarnassus*, he observes that it borrowed on the world, Two great persons, *Herodotus*, and in our time (saies he) *Dionysius* the Historiographer. So that since *Strabo* witnesses, in that same work, that he had it in hand, under *Augustus*, and *Tiberius*, we are certain, that *Dionysius Halicarnassens* was also of the same Age, which is, as all know, one of those, which most favored learning and learned men.



*Suidas* names among many Writers, who bore the name of *Dionysius*, another besides him, we speak of, who was of *Halicarnassus* also, and of his Posterity; and appeared, under the Emperor *Adrian*, with the Surname of *Musicus*, because though he was an Orator, his principal Talent lay in Musick, of which he composed many Books; and among others, one wherein he interpreted all the places, of *Plato's Republick*, which could not be well understood, without a particular understanding of that Art. That which makes me say, that this other *Dionysius* was descended from the first, is, that the same *Suidas* saies, that from *Dionysius*, the *Historian*, came one *Dionysius* (whom he calls) *Atticista*, who lived under *Adrian*, and had writ a Lexicon of the Attick words, as may be seen in the Hundred and Two and Fiftieth Section of *Photius*. For my part, I am easily perswaded, that this *Atticist*, and *Musitian*, are but one, since they are both mentioned to be under the same Emperor. As for our *Historian*, he came to *Rome*, a little after *Augustus* had happily finished the Civil Wars, and sojourned there Two and Twenty whole years, learning the Latine Tongue, and making his provision of necessaries to the design, he had of writing his History.

He read to this end all Books, which are called Commentaries and Annals, made by those ~~Romans~~ who had writ with some reputation, about the concerns of their State, as old *Cato*,  
*Fabius*



## *Dionysius Halicarnassens.*

*Pabius Maximus, Valerius Antias, Licinius Macer*, and some others. But acknowledges, that the conversation he had with the worthy men, of that *Capital City* of the world, and his conferences with an infinite number of learned men there, were not less servicable to him; than all the other diligence he could use. His History was of the *Roman Antiquities*, which he comprised in Twenty Books, whereof there remains no more, than the first Eleven, to this Age, which conclude with the time, when the Consuls resumed the chief Authority in the Republick, after the government of the *Decemviri*, which happened, Three Hundred and Twelve years after the foundation of *Rome*. The whole work comprehended much more; for it passed from the taking of *Troy*, over the fabulous, and Historical time, to the beginning of the first *Punick War*; ending where *Polybius* begins his History, near Two Hundred years later, than what we even now mentioned. 1

Whereupon, it behoves us to observe the error of *Sigismond Gelenius*, who imagined that *Dionysius Halicarnassens*, whom he has translated very well, never ended his work, and that death hindered him from composing above *Eleven Books*, of the *Twenty*, he promised to give to the Publick. When *Stephanus*, a Greek Author, who writ of Cities, quotes the *Sixteenth* and *Twentieth Book*, of the *Roman Antiquities*, of our *Dionysius*: and *Photius* saies, in his *Bibliotheca*, that he



he read all the *Twenty Books*, giving the *last* the same ending, which we assigned unto it.

This learned *Patriarch* assures us also, that he *Photius* saw the *compendium*, or *synopsis*, which *Dionysius* made of his own History, which he reduced into Five Books, with much *Eloquence*, but it was not agreeable to a Reader, because of the strict Retrenchment of all he thought not absolutely necessary. The loss of that *Epitomy* would be less sensible, if we had the first composition entire; which has received so much approbation, especially in respect of the calculation of times, and what relates to Chronology, that all Criticks prefer, in this point, *Dionysius Halicarnassens*, before *Titus Livius*. And *Scaliger* confesses, in his *Animadversions* upon *Eusebius*, that we have no Author remaining, who has so well kept the order of years.

As for his *Stile*, *Photius* considers it, as extraordinary and new, but accompanied with a simplicity, which renders it delightful: and he adds, that the *Elegancy* of his discourse or phrase corrects and softens all the roughness which is sometimes found in his speech. He commends him also very much, for having understood how to use many digressions, which retain, and recreate the mind of the Reader, when the evenness of an Historical narration, begins to be tedious and wearisome to him.

And certainly it is not to be imagined, that a man of that reputation, which *Dionysius Halicarnassens*.



*carnassens* had acquired in learning, could produce any thing, which was not very polite, and worthy of his name. We have his *compositions of Rhetorick*; and the most subtle Criticks place him, in the first rank of those who delighted in that sort of study: and though there were no more to be said of him, than the request that was made him, by *Pompey the Great*, to give him his judgment, on the first Greek Historians, and especially on *Herodotus*, and *Xenophon*; it shews sufficiently the esteem, wherein he lived in his time, and of what Authority he was in *Rome*, among the learned; when *Pompey* chose him, out of so many others, to inform him therein.

If there be any thing which may be found fault with, either in that letter, which he addresses to *Annea*, and *Tubero*, or in others upon the same matter, it is that he was too exact, and rigorous therein, giving laws to Eloquence, so full of severity, that they take from it, one of the best parts, which is the generous liberty, whereof it has alwaies made profession. In effect he often straightens that noble Art so much, that he deprives it, almost of all its reality, and reduces it to a simple *Idea*, without hopes that it can be practised by any one, for the future: so that one may say, according to the strictness of his Maxims, there was never any perfect Historian, nor true Orator. If one studies his precepts of *Rhetorick*, upon all the sorts of Oration, his characters



acters of the Ancients, wherein he shews what one ought to imitate in them, and what to avoid ; with his other Treatise, made to instruct us how to examin their Writings ; the truth of what I have said will appear, and the Spleen of this Critick will be discovered , who found fault with the Stile of *Plato*. This was one of the occasions of a letter, which *Pompey* taking *Plato's* part, writ to him. And we see by *Dionysius* his answer , that although to content *Pompey*, he professes himself, an admirer of *Plato*, he forbears not to prefer *Demosthenes* to him, protesting, that it was onely to give the whole advantage to the latter, that he exercised his censure, against the former. Nevertheless it appears, that at another season he spared his *Demosthenes*, no more than the rest, so prone was his inclination to carping : because after he had conceived things in the highest perfection, he pretended to find nothing, which was not far beneath them, and which did not consequently displease him.

But since it is not our intention to consider him here, so much an Orator as an Historian, Let us be content to make some observations, on his *Roman Antiquities*, to be acquainted with his judgment, concerning the principal matters of History.

We have already seen, that he was no Enemy to digressions, when we said , that *Photius* drew one of the greatest causes to praise him, from his making such good use of them. And  
that



that which he makes, in his Seventh Book, to describe the whole course of the Tyranny; of *Aristodemus*, surnamed *Mollis*, shews that he thought them, one of the Ornaments of History. The long Orations of *Tullus Hostilius*, and *Metius Suffetius* in the Third Book, with others of *Servius Tullius* which are in the Fourth, make it also appear sufficiently, that he did not condemn, as some have done, all sort of direct Orations; though he has elsewhere blamed the bad ones. He is not content, in his Fifth Book, to praise *P. Valerius Publicola*; but takes occasion thereupon, to prescribe it to Historians, not to represent, the brave and glorious actions of illustrious men, in their Histories, without making their particular and Domestick virtues appear, accompanied with their merited praises: which is directly contrary to the opinion of those, who would have them refrain, from all things that may excite the passions: least they thereby invade the Province of an Orator. In the same Book, on the Subject, of the Conspiracy of *Tarquins*, detected, and severely punished, by the Consul *Salpiti*us, he delivers another important precept, to those who write History, not to set down barely, in their narratives, the issue of things, but to represent them alwaies, jointly with their causes, and the means which were used to make them succeed, not forgetting the least circumstances; nay to penetrate, if it be possible, into the Counsels of the first Authors,  
and



and those who had the greatest share in the execution. But though *Dionysius Halicarnassens* re-  
proved *Theopompus*, for having employed some  
comparisons to no purpose, he does not judge  
them to be all faulty, for he makes use of them  
sometimes, and of those Parallels, or affinities of  
actions, which many cannot endure. Thus, on the  
Subject of *Tarquin*, who to answer the Servant  
of his Son, beat down in his presence, the heads  
of those Poppies, which were higher than the  
rest: he remarks, that *Thrasylbulus* had practised  
the same thing, towards *Periander*, pulling up,  
before his Messenger, those Ears of Corn, which  
overtopped the rest And treating of the crea-  
tion, and absolute power of the Roman Dicta-  
tors, he observes, that this Magistracy was pro-  
bably instituted, in imitation of the Greeks:  
because the Inhabitants of *Mitylene*, now called  
*Metelin*, had formerly raised *Pittacus*, one of  
the *Seven Sages*, to a like dignity (which they  
limited to a certain time onely) in an expedi-  
tion, against some persons, banished from their  
State, who were companions to the Poet *Alcaeus*.

Lib. 4

Lib.

arbs ma-  
xima Les-  
bi, juxta  
Methym-  
num.

As these opinions, which we have examined  
elsewhere, more amply than here, seem to me ve-  
ry receivable; so we must, on the contrary, take  
heed of many improbable Tales, which he re-  
lates sometimes with too much assurance. He  
makes a Razor cut a Whetstone in two of them,  
by the command of the Augur, *Navius Actius*,  
and represents *Castor*, and *Pollux*, fighting for

Lib. 3.



Lib. 6.  
Lib. 7.  
Lib. 8.

Lib. 5

Dec. 1. l. 2.

the *Romans*, against the *Latins*; and the *Rivers*, *Vulturnus*, and *Glanis*, to remount to their Source, in favour of the Inhabitants of *Cuma*. And relates, that a Statue, of the *Goddeſs Fortune*, pronounces twice theſe words, *rite me Matrone dedicasti*, according to the words of the *Annals*, which he thought himſelf obliged to rehearſe: and he would have had reaſon for it, if he had left us ſome hint, not to believe it; as he might have done perhaps, if it would have been permitted. But there is not a worſe Relation, in the *Roman Hiſtory*, than the action of *Clælia*, as he repreſents it. He reports, that this *Roman Virgin*, who was given in hoſtage, with many others, to *Porſena*, King of the *Hetruſcians*, returned with all her companions, from the *Tuſcan Camp*, into the City of *Rome*, ſwimming over the *River Tiber*, wherein they had aſk'd leave to bath themſelves; as if it were poſſible, that fearful Women, and who had not learned to Swim, durſt but look upon ſuch a River, with deſign to paſs it, and caſt themſelves deſperately into it, without a neceſſity, the peace being almoſt then concluded. For though *Plutarch* deſcribes the place, in the life of *Publicola*, ſo very agreeable, and convenient to bath in, yet he acknowledges, that the River was very Rapid, and deep. I confeſs *Livy* writes with no more likelyhood, when he tells the ſame ſtory; and that *Plutarch* does no more than doubt, of that of *Cloelia*, who, as many reported, paſſed the *Tiber*, by her ſelf, on Horſeback,



back thereby encouraging the rest of her Companions, to Swim over it. Nevertheless I dare say, that the report of *Valerius Maximus*, has much more appearance of truth in it, than what the others related, though he was less obliged than they, to follow it strictly, since he was not an Historian, and his Subject engaged him onely, to enrich (and if we may say so) to illustrate, with fine colours, such memorable actions. He writes that *Clælia*, under the favour of a dark Night, escaped from the Enemies Camp, mounted on a Horse, which bare her, to the other side of the *Tiber*, amongst her friends: and the Statue *Equestris* which was raised to her, and which they all mention, would even force them to be of this opinion, if they had not rather chose to follow the most popular rumour, and that which rendered their narration more agreeable, because it seemed extraordinary, and marvellous; wherein, it is almost incredible, how much the greater part of Historians transgress.

I will not forget, for a Corollary, to what is above expressed, that by the consent of all learned men, *Dionysius Halicarnassens* unfolds the *Roman Antiquities*, not onely in respect of time, as before mentioned, but also in what relates to matter, much better, than any of the Latin Historians have done. For his being a stranger, was so far from being prejudicial to him, that upon that account, he made it his business, to observe an infinite number, of the most curious particulars, of



the Roman State, that are found in his Books, and which we do not learn, in their own Authors; either because they neglected to write, that which was familiar to them, which they thought, all the World knew, as well as themselves; or because this Grecian was more careful, and diligent, than they, to seek after that, which might best conduce, to make all the circumstances of their affairs, known to Posterity. And it is a great glory to him, to have surpassed them all in things, wherein they ought to have had such great advantage over him.

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REFLEC



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

### HISTORY

#### OF

# JOSEPHUS

A Certain Roman Consul was derided heretofore, for writing a History in Greek; who, to excuse the impurity of his language, alledged in his Preface, that he was born in *Italy*, where nothing but Latin was spoken. Which *Cato* reading, scoffingly said, 'That Author was very ridiculous, who chose rather to ask pardon for a fault, than to avoid it, when nothing obliged him to do it; and the offence was not committed when he asked forgiveness. *Plutarch* relates this after another manner, and will have *Cato* pronounce, the Consul most worthy of excuse: if he could make it appear, that he was forced to write in Greek, by a Decree of the *Amphictyones*. This ingenious reflection which imports, that an excuse is alwaies unreasonable, when it is not necessary, cannot be ap-

*Aulus Albinus.*

*Malisti culpam deprecari, quam culpam vicare. A. Gell. l. 11. c. 8. in Cat.*



*Æmil-  
Prob. in.  
Hann.*

*utro La-  
tii, una  
exceleber-  
rims, in  
Filibus  
Æquo-  
rum.*

plied to *Josephus* : because, though as a Jew, he was as great a stranger to the Greek Tongue, as the person before mentioned, he was compelled to make use of it, or the Latin, to be understood by the Grecians and Romans, for whom principally, in his Prologue to the Judaick War, he declares that he set Pen to Paper. Few are ignorant, that those Nations had no esteem, for the Hebrew Language, and it is evident, that when the Great Captain *Hannibal*, to recreate himself, had a mind to set down in writing, the actions of *Cn. Manlius Volso*, in *Asia*, he did it not, in the *Punick* or *Carthaginian* Tongue, which was a Dialect of the Hebrew, but in Greek ( that he had learned of the Historian, *Sofilius* of *Lacedæmon*, his Master ) that his work might be understood in the world. *Josephus*, who had the same design, found himself obliged to write in Greek, which was familiar enough to him, because he had been conversant in the greatest part of *Syria*. Moreover, had he been equally skill'd in these Two Tongues, he ought to have preferred, as he did, the Greek, which was then Mistress of all Sciences, and so much valued at *Rome*, for that reason, that some Roman Citizens chose rather in their writings, to express themselves in Greek, than Latin. Such a one was *Ælianus*, who soon after *Josephus*, under the Emperors *Nerva*, *Traianus*, and *Adrianus*, writ *de Animalibus*, *de varia Historia*, *de Re Militari* and some other Treatises. He was born in *Præneste*, and therefore  
reputed



## Josephus.

reputed a *Roman*, having composed his works in Greek, in such rare expressions, that *Philostatus* affirmed (after he had placed him among his sophisters) that his Phrase was no less Attick, than that which was spoken, by the most *Mediterranean*, in the *Attick Territory* (to use his own terms.) As for *Josophus*, his Style is very clear, if we may believe *Photius*; and with a great purity he joins, to the weight of his reasons, the force and elegance of Expression: so that he is, as this Father relates, very dexterous, as well in moving passions, as in allaying them, when he judges it requisite. Nor is it a small honour to him, to be so successful in a foreign Tongue, as to have purchased such high praise, as is attributed by the learned to him. But we must not forget that besides his merit this way, *Eusebius* reports, that he exposed his Books of the Jewish Wars, and Antiquities, in Hebrew, as well as in Greek, that they might be useful to more People.

*Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 9.*

His Extraction was very illustrious, as well on his Fathers side, who came from the *High Priests* of *Hierusalem*, as on his Mothers, who was of the Royal Blood, of the *Asamoneans* or *Machabees*. He came into the World, in the time of *Caligula*, about the Thirty Ninth year, of the Incarnation of *Christ*; and was in it, under *Domitian*, so that he lived, during the Reign of Nine Emperors at least. When he was Six and Twenty years old, he made a voiage into *Italy*,  
in



Nomine  
Aliturus.  
Vossius de  
Histor.  
Græcis l.  
2. c. 8.

in favour of some Ecclesiasticks of his Nation, whom *Felix*, Governor of *Judæa*, had sent Prisoners to *Rome*. A Jewish Comedian, beloved by *Nero*, supported him at Court, and brought him acquainted likewise, with the Empress *Poppæa Augusta*, from whom he received some benefit: so that having brought his business to a happy issue, he returned with content, into *Palestine*. The Factions, which were then in the *Holy Land*, made him be chosen Captain of the *Galileans*, a charge which he executed most worthily, until *Jotapata* was taken, where he was reduced to cast himself into a Wel, which had already served for a retreat, to Forty of his Souldiers, wherein he suffered marvellous extremities, but at last he became Prisoner to the Romans. In that time of his Captivity, he foretold to *Vespasian*, his exaltation to the Empire, and that he would soon deliver him from his bonds, as *Suetonius* reports, in the life of this Emperor, and as *Josephus* writes himself, in the Third Book, and Fourteenth Chapter, of the Jewish War. He shews also his deliverance, in the Fifth Book, and Twelfth Chapter, after that *Vespasian* had found the truth of his Predictions. What the profane Historians, such as *Tacitus*, and *Suetonius*, relate conformable to this, deserves our observation, for they assien, that all the Provinces of the East, were then firmly possess'd with a belief, that they, to whom the Destinies, and Sacred Writs had promised the Empire of the World, should

at

Cap. 5.

Lib. 5.  
hist. 14  
Vesp. c.  
4.



at that time come from *Judaea*. The Jews, and *Josephus* amongst the rest, interpreted what regarded the true *Messias*, of *Vespasian* and his Son *Titus*, because of the victories they had newly gained over them, and the unmeasurable extent, of the Roman Empire. And it happened that after his deliverance from his imprisonment, he was Spectator of the taking of *Hierusalem*, by the same *Titus*, and composed since as an Eye-witness, the Seven Books, of the *Judaick War* of which he made to him, and *Vespasian* who was then living, such an agreeable present, that *Titus* caused them to be put into the Publick Library, subscribed and approved of, by his own hand. *Josephus* adds in his own Life, which he himself has given us in writing, that King *Agrippa* had testified unto him by many letters, that he held him for the truest Author, of all those who enterprised to treat of the affairs of their country. Being return'd to *Rome* with *Vespasian*, he lived there under his protection and that of his Two Sons, gratified with their Pensions, and with the condition of a free Citizen of *Rome*, and many other benefits, which gave him means to finish peaceably under *Domitian* his Twenty Books of the Jewish Antiquities, from the Creation of the World, to the Twelfth year of the Empire of *Nero*.

His Two Books against *Apion Plistonices* are made in favour of the Jews, whom this same *Apion* Surnamed also *Grammaticus*, had defamed as

much

*Ab eo acceperit Epistolas septuaginta duas &c. Vos. loco citato.*

*He was an Egyptian born in Oasis a City of Egypt, & Alexandria vocari gaudebat, Vossius de script. grecis l. 2. c. 7*



much as he could, in a work he publish'd, being sent Deputy to *Rome*, to the disadvantage of *Philo* and his Country-men. But the discourse of the Empire of *Reason*, or the Martydom of the *Machabees*, is the most eloquent of all the pieces writ by *Josephus*. As for the Treatise of his life, he compos'd it in imitation of many great Men, who had done the like thing before him, and have been imitated by many others. For passing by *Moses*, who alone, fill'd with the Spirit of *God*, writ not onely his Life, but Death; it is known, that a little before *Josephus*, the Emperors *Augustus*, *Tiberius*, and *Claudius*, were pleas'd to leave the platform of their lives to Posterity, traced with their own Pens: *Agrippina* Mother of *Nero*, did no less, as *Tacitus* reports. And private persons such as *Sylla*, *Varro*, *Rutilius Rufus*, *Emilius Scaurus*, and *Nicolaus Damascenus*, had already practis'd that sort of writing. If we must mention others who exercised themselves therein, since *Josephus*, we shall name in the first place the Emperors *Adrianus*, *Marcus Antoninus*, and *Severus*; secondly, to draw nearer to these times, *James* King of *Arragon*, *Maximilian* the first, the Abbot *Trithemius*, *Cardanus*, and *Augustus de Thou*, who have all written Books of their own Lives.

But there is no small difference at this day, between learned Men, touching the credit *Josephus* his History ought to have amongst us. For if we refer our selves to *Maldonat*, *Melchior Canus*,



*Canus*, *Pererius*, *Salmeron*, *Baronius*, *Salian* and some others, we should have no value for all his labour, which they defame as full of Anachronisms in the Calculation of times, and Fables in the Narration of things. *Baronius* amongst the rest, rebukes him very severely in his Preface which he calls *Apparatus*, &c. and in many other places of his *Annals*, nay he proceeds so far as to impute to him that he knew not justly his own Age, and that he was mistaken in it by six whole years. But if on the other side we yeild to the judgment of his *Partisans*, such as *Scaliger* and *Calvisius*, of whose Party are *Justin Martyr*, *Eusebius*, *St. Hierome*, *Suidas*, and several other Ancients, we shall be obliged to place him in the rank of the best Historians which remain. And truly when I consider with what recommendation *Justin* spoke of him, I am not easily induced to condemn him so absolutely as many doe. He styles him many times an exceeding wise Historiographer, and joyning him with *Thilo*, he saies they are Two Persons worthy of great respect. As for *Eusebius*, he remarks in his Ecclesiastical History, that *Josephus* was honoured with a Statue at *Rome*, which we have already observed, giving him the Title of a most true Author, and one that deserves that credit should be given to what he Write. The Books Stiled an *Evangelical preparation* of *Eusebius*, are full of passages of *Josephus*; and in the Third of his *Evangelical Demonstration*, he rehearses

*Ad. Ann.*  
*Chr. 58.*  
*Cap. 158.*

*Lib. 3.*  
*cap. 9.*



rehearses that place of the Jewish Antiquities, which makes such express mention of *Jesus Christ*. As for *St Hierome*, after he had placed *Jesophus* amongst the Ecclesiastical Writers, he confirms the favours he received from *Vespasian* and *Titus*, and the honour that was done him by putting his Books into the Publick Library, and raising a Statue to him in *Rome*. He quotes also his forementioned Testimony of *Jesus Christ*. And in one of his Epistles, he did not forbear to name him the *Græcian Livy*, which shews the great value he had for his History. *Suidas* recites almost all the same things which he could see in *Justin*, *Eusebius*, and *St Hierome*, and he gives him particularly the Quality of a Lover of truth, which is much to be considered in his case. I wonder not therefore after these Testimonies, if many will take *Josephus* his part, against those who endeavoured utterly to discredit him. Nevertheless *Scaliger* was a little too forward, when he named him in a Preface to a Book intituled *the correction of Times*, in one place the most diligent, and greatest friend to truth of all Writers, *Diligentissimum*, τὸν φιλαπαιδεστατον *omnium Scriptorum*, out-doing in this manner *Suidas* by a Superlative Encœmium, and in another place the most true and religious of all Authors, *Omnium Scriptorum veracissimum & religiosissimum*. He adds further that the integrity and learning of *Josephus* showing it self in every thing, he shall not be backward to assert boldly, that not onely  
in



in what relates to the Jewish affairs, but in all others also, it is more fit and sure for one to refer himself unto this Hebrew, than to all the rest of the Greek and Latin Authors. I would not proceed to so determinate a judgment; yet I think one may safely say that abating what may be contrary to the Sacred Texts of the Old and New Testament, *Josephus* is for the rest, an Historian of great Authority, and one that merits a great deference, especially in the things of his own time; wherof he writes as an Eye-witness: for we ought I think in charity to make that interpretation, of what so many Christians have often uttered in his Commendation.

Although that passage of *Josephus* concerning *Jesus Christ*, and the primitive times of Christianity was quoted, as we have already shown, in *Eusebius* his time, and since by Great men, it is suspected by many others, who think it foisted or thrust into the Text of *Josephus*, by one of those pious frauds, which they pretend to have been sometimes used in favour of Religion. *Baronius* who is not of their mind, saies, that place was found strook out in an Hebrew Manuscript of the Jews in *Rome*, which he delivers not for the proper language of *Josephus*, (as it might have been according to *Eusebius*) but only for a translation from Greek into Hebrew. This justifies the Antiquity of the passage, and the animosity of the Jews against our belief, rather than it fully decides the Question. And though  
the

*Ad ann.*  
*34.C.226.*



*Ad ann.  
96. cap.*

the same Cardinal endeavours to shew in another place, that which could humanly induce *Josephus* to give such a glorious Testimony of our Saviour, without a Divine impulsion, which possibly might force him to it: nevertheless he allows this passage as we have it now, to be incorrect, and that other to be more like truth as it was received in St *Hieromes* time where *Josephus* does not affirm that *Jesus* was the expected Christ, *Christus hic erat*, but onely that he was believed to be so, & *credebatur esse Christus*

*Sect. 47.  
76. et  
238.*

There is cause to wonder how it happened, that *Photius* never remembred so notable a passage in Three different Sections wherein he examines this Author. The chief thing is, that those Ages are past, in which the Authority of *Josephus* was so important to the establishment of the Church: yet they that will make use of it in this, either against the Jews, or otherwise, may well do it after so many Fathers, whose opinions it is always allowed to follow.

*Cap. 2.*

*Lib. I. de  
bello Jud.  
cap. 21.*

But we ought to take heed of the omissions of *Josephus*, which tend to the suppression of many Evangelical truths. For though he made no mention of the coming of the Wise men into *Judea*, no more than the Massacre of the young Innocents, spoke of by St *Matthew*, it does not follow that we should doubt ever so little of that which we read of it in the History of the Gospel. Truly it is very strange that *Josephus*, who pardoned *Herod* nothing, who remembred well how



how that Tyrant had burned or cut the Throats of a great number of young men, with their teachers, for having beat down the Roman Eagle from the Gate of the Temple of *Hierusalem*, and who has so expressly shown us all the other crimes of the same man, namely in that Oration of the Jews spoke at *Rome*, against his memory in the presence of the Emperor; that this *Josephus*, I say, should not have said the least word of so cruel an action, so odious, and so noised abroad, as the murder of so many poor Infants, put to death by the command of *Herod*, must needs have been. But his forgetfulness, or Jewish malice, if he concealed it wittingly, cannot prejudice truth, nor be alledged against the Authority of our Sacred Texts, and that, of a Pagan also such as *Macrobius*, which is express for that, in the Second Book of his *Saturnals*, where he rehearses *Augustus* his words, to this effect; *That it was better to be one of Herods Swine than his Child.* *Josephus* moreover has writ many things in his *Antiquities* quite contrary to what *Moses* has done, in which he cannot be followed without impiety. As for the rest, it cannot be denied that he taught as many fine curiosities of the History of his Country, which we should be ignorant of without him, who has delivered them very well to us, though it has been observed that he did not alwaies agree with his Country-man *Philo* in his relations.

*Ib. lib. 2.  
cap. 4.*

That which ought to recommend his History  
very



very much unto us, is, that besides the advantage he had by his extraction, since knowledge and the Priesthood were in a strict union amongst the Jews, he was so well instructed in learning from his most tender years, that at the Age of Fourteen, as he writes, the chief Prelates and Principal men of *Hierusalem*, as ~~was~~ his Counsel in the greatest difficulties of the Law. At Sixteen years old he applied himself to the study of what was particular to each of the Three Sects, which were current in his Country, the *Pharisean*, the *Saducean*, and the other which was called the *Essenian*; whose professors were very Austere and solitary in their way of life. One of them called *Bannus*, lived in the Desert; as the strictest *Hermits* of this time, his food was of Fruit and Herbs, covering himself with nothing but leaves, or barks of Trees, and washing his Body Night and Day in cold Water against the temptation of the flesh. *Josephus* passed Three years with this Anchorite, which ended, he betook himself again to a civil life, and made publick profession of following the *Pharisean* Sect, which he maintains to be very like unto the Stoick, that has been so much valued by the Greeks and Latins. It is certain that none but the Pharisees, made publick profession of Politics, and partaked in the government of the State; so that if a *Saducee* was compelled to be a Magistrate, which he alwaies undertook very unwillingly, the People obliged him to yeild to the.



the opinion of the Pharisees, and to be guided by their Maxims, as may be seen in *Josephus*, where he treats of these Three fore-mentioned Sects, and of a Fourth which was a refinement of the *Pharisean*. Thus according to the Principals of his Sect, he accepted the chief employments amongst the Jews either in Peace or War, which gives a marvellous Authority to his History; as being ordinarily composed of things which he saw himself, and actions wherein he had often the greatest share.

We must take heed of confounding as *Munster* has done the false *Josephus*, commonly called *Josippus Gorionides* ( who also made, or rather falsified, a History of the Jewish War ) with our Historian. When this *Pseudo-Josephus*, in his Third Book placed *Goths* in *Spain*, and in his Fifth made *Gallia* to be possessed by the *French*; he sufficiently declared his impertinence, to have aspired thereby to pass for the true *Josephus*, in whose time there were neither *Goths* in *Spain*, nor *French* in *Gallia*. It is filled throughout with the like repugnancies, which are so plain that nothing but the credulity of the Jews of these last Ages can endure it; whose ingenuity alone consists in cheating themselves. *Scaliger* takes this man for a Circumcised *French* man, who is not a very ancient Author, or at least has writ since the Sixth Age of our Salvation But the



Investive, which I have already used in the Chapter of *Xenophon*, against such Impostours, deters me from declaming any more against them.

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REFLEC-



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# ARRIAN

**I**N the time of *Adrian* the Emperor, and his two successors, *Antoninus Pius*, and *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, *Arrian* the *Macedonian*, began to write his History : he lived in the Hundred and Thirtieth year of *Christ* : he was a Disciple of *Epictetus*. It is not easie to know, whether his History was writ, before his *Enchiridion*, and those other discourses of his Master, which *Simplicius*, in his Commentaries, assures us to be composed by him, for though it might not be thought, according to the ordinary, and natural course of mens dispositions, he should apply himself to Philosophical contemplations, in the Youthful part of his life, yet it appears, in the Preface of those discourses, that he writ them, as they were spoken by *Epictetus*, collected from his mouth, whilst he was yet the Scholar,



lar, of that great Philosopher, and he complains, that they were published without his privitie, which is a certain evidence, of their being writ in his younger Age *Photius* saith, they were formerly in Twelve Books, besides certain Philosophical dissertations, by him mentioned, which are lost to this Age.

As for his Historical Compositions, though we have not them all intire; by what remains of them, we may discern enough, to oblige us to value his merit. And his Seven Books, of the Conquest of *Alexander* the Great, and Eight, which treat particularly of *India*, may suffice to give him a Rank, amongst the chiefest Historians.

I shall not insist on the description, which he hath made of the *Euxin* Sea, and the Countries which border on it, nor on that of the *Erythrean* Sea, which comprehends part of the *Indian* Coasts, the *Persian Gulf*, and the Red Sea, because they are rather peices, of Geography, than History. *Rhamusius* observes, that many would distinguish this *Arrian*, who, in his Eighth Book, describes the Voyage of *Nearchus*, Admiral to *Alexander*, from the River *Indus*, to the *Persian Gulf*; from him, who is the Author, of *Periplus*, or the description of the *Erythrean* Ocean. The difference of Stile (whereon, those that debate this matter, establish their opinion) is but a slender foundation, for all agree (if it must be) that there were Two *Arrians*, that they both lived,  
in



in the time of the *Antonines*, and that Prince of Geographers, *Claudius Ptolemaeus Alexandrinus*. But that, which the same *Rhamusius* notes on this occasion, is very considerable. That though *Arrian* hath often followed, the opinion of *Marinus Tyrinus*, whom *Ptolemy* does alwaies respect, yet it appears, that his is a better, and more just situation, of many parts of the East-Indies, than that, which *Ptolemy* has left us; as is manifest by many Modern Relations, exhibited thereof, by the *Portuguese*. It is certain, that *Arrian's* merit recommended him so much, to the Emperors of his time, that they advanced him, to the Consular dignity.

He was a Native of *Nicomedia*, a City of *Bithynia*, where he made his Studies, and became a Priest, of *Ceres*, and *Proserpine*, as he himself reports, in those Eight Books, of his *Bithynicks*, mentioned by *Photius*, which began the History of his Country, at the fabulous times, and continued it, to the death of the last Monarch of *Nicomedia*, who left the *Romans*, to be the heirs of his Crown. He pretends to have writ this History of *Alexander* the Great, by Divine inspiration; and that he did it, under the Title of *Ἀνὰ Βάσιως Ἀλεξάνδρου*; and with the like number of Seven Books, as *Xenophon* chose, to describe the Conquests of *Cyrus*: and some observe, that he so affected to follow that Author, that he hath perfectly imitated him in his Stile, and many other respects, and is therefore called, the Young, or



the Second *Xenophon*. He declares in his Preface, that his Relations are by him delivered, on the faith of *Aristobulus*, the Son of *Aristobulus*, and *Ptolemæus Lagus*, who accompanied *Alexander* in all his Enterprises, which were the more credible for that, besides the Royal Quality of the latter, they did neither of them publish their writings, till after the death of *Alexander*, without any other obligation, than a real desire of discovering the truth of his Actions. And yet our *Author* professes, in his description of the death of *Callisthenes* the Philosopher, that it was diversly reported by them, though they were both near the person of *Alexander*, when the process was made against that unfortunate person. *Aristobulus* saies, he was led in Chains after the Army, till he died of a Sickness, and the other affirms, that, after having been exposed to Torture, he was Stangled, for having been unhappily involved in the conspiracy of *Hermolaus*; so difficult it is, to know the truth of actions performed: and there is nothing more certain, than that one and the same action is many times variously related by those that saw it, because of the divers respects, and interests, wherewith most men are preoccupied. But notwithstanding these particular defects, which *Arrian* could not redress; his History is the more esteemable, because those of *Aristobulus*, and *Ptolomy*, are not to be found, moreover there are many places, in the History of *Quintus Curtius*, which have need



to be reformed, by the Text of *Arrian*, for when he writes, in his Sixth Book, that *Alexander* parted from the *Batavians*, doubtless it ought to be, from the City of *Ecbatana*, as it is expressed in *Arrian*. And the voyages to the East-Indies, made these last Hundred and Fifty years, shew, that he has better represented, the Houses or Cabbins, of certain *Ichthyophages*, built of the bones of Whales, and other Fishes, than *Quintus Curtius*, who saies, they are made of Shells, and the excrements of the Sea, *conchas, & purgamenta Maris*. But there are some places also in *Arrians* History, which the other doth very well explain, and I shall not determine, which of them has been most lucky, in expressing the name of *Alexanders* Physician, whom *Arrian* calls, *Critodemus*: and *Quintus Curtius*, *Critobulus* (for *Plutarch* makes no mention of either) and *Pliny*, when he commends the excellency of that Physician, who drew the Arrow out of *Alexanders* Fathers eie, without disfiguring his Face, naming him *Critobulus*, makes it to be reasonably supposed, that his Son made use of the same Physician, and consequently that *Curtius* did not mistake in the name.

Bataues in the French Original. Chief City in Media now called Yerack. Moreri dictionary.

*Photius* commends *Arrian*, as equal to the best Historians, his narration is alwaies agreeable, because it is both short, and intelligible: and he never discomposes his Readers, with tedious digressions, and such Parentheses, as may obscure the sense of his sentences. And one cannot easily find,



find, in all his History, any one such Miraculous event, as might render it suspected, if you will except some predictions of *Aristander*, and the story of Two new Springs, which appeared near the River of *Oxus*, as soon as *Alexander* was there Encamped.

The pattern, which *Arrian* proposed to imitate, permits him not to elevate his Style, to a Sublime degree of Oratory ; because the Eloquence of *Xenophon* is not of that order, but his Phrase is mingled with such excellent figures, that by retaining all the clearness, of him that he imitates, his Style has nothing in it, either too flatly low, or too highly Towering. He occasionally uses, sometimes oblique Orations, and sometimes direct ones. And all along, in his Second Book, he Artificially couches the imperious letter of *Alexander* to *Darius*. The Oration of *Callisthenes*, against *Anaxarchus* who would have *Alexander* to be adored, is one of the most considerable, of those that are direct. And there are Two others, not inferiour to it, of the same Prince to his Soldiers, which began to mutiny, once in the *Indies*, and the other time on the Banks of the River *Tygris*. Those which were made, before the Battel, given at the Streights of *Amanus*, and at the Plain of *Arbela*, or *Gaugamela*, are oblique, and much more concise, than the occasion required. *Photius* makes a very favourable judgment of the History of *Arrian* (*viz.*) that whosoever shall compare it, with the most Ancient of those, which



which are so much esteemed, it will be found, that there are many things in them, which in no wise approach the value of the other.

But yet there is one passage, in the middle of his first Book, wherein there is Vanity enough, to stain the whole body of his History, if decency did not oblige us, to consider it with that indulgence, which the best of us may sometimes need, in respect to our own productions; the place I mean, is, where he declares, that the greatness, and number, of the famous Achievements of *Alexander*, made him enterprise the writing of his History, by the assurance he had, of being able to acquit himself well therein, and that without putting his name to it, or mentioning his extraction, or Quality, he would have the world to know, he might value himself in all those respects: and that having loved letters from his Infancy, as *Alexander* has merited the chiefest Rank, amongst the Leaders of Armies; so the greatest, amongst those that have enterprised the writing of History, cannot without injustice be denied to him. This impudence of *Arrian* puts me in mind, of the impertinence of another Grecian, that was contemporary with him, of whom *Photius* writes, that he dedicated his composition, to the Emperor, *Marcus Antoninus*, to get thereby the more credit to it, and that it might obtain a more favourable reception: and at his first entrance, preparatory to the matter, he pretended, that his Style should be as  
 Sublime,

Scd. 131



Sublime, as the actions of *Alexander*, which was the subject of his Book, when, alas! Nothing was ever lower, and more barren, than his Narrations nor more weak and faint, than the expressions wherein he exposed them. It may be reasonably believed, that the Ambition of this pretender equalled in the beginning the vanity of *Arrian*; but his weak performances made all his promises ridiculous in the end, whereas the other hath given, to Posterity, one of the best Histories that Antiquity hath left us; yet he ought not to pass without a censure, for the fault he committed, there being scarce any thing in the world more insupportable than self praise; which, instead of the esteem and reputation that our merit might justly challenge for any worthy enterprize, draws on us nothing but contempt, and hatred.

Besides the Seven Books, before mentioned, of the expeditions of *Alexander* the Great, and the Eighth, of so much of the *East-Indies*, as was known in his time: He writ, in Ten Books, the History of those actions, which happened amongst *Alexanders* Captains, after his death, for they could not agree about the dividing their Conquests; but of those there remains nothing at this day, but an abridgment of them, which *Photius* gives us, in his *Bibliotheca*, and we have also lost his *Bitkynicks*; and Two other Treatises, One, of the most considerable actions, performed by *Timolcon* of *Corinth*, in *Sicily*, and the Other,  
of



of the means used by *Dion* of *Syracuse*, to free the City so called, and all the circumjacent Country, from the Tyranny and oppression of *Dionysius*, the Second Tyrant of that name: nor has the misfortune of the Age been less, by the loss of another work of his, composed in Seventeen Books, which *Stephanus*, in his *Cities*, mentions more than once, whose Subject is, of the *Parthians*, and their descent from the *Scythians*, and their Wars with the *Romans*, in the time of the Emperour *Trajan*.

*Photius* informs us, that he writ another Treatise, called *the Alanick History*: so that many believe, that which *Dion Cassius* reports, of one *Arrian* Governour of *Cappadocia*, under the Emperour *Adrian*, who reduced the *Alanians*, and *Massagets*, to the obedience of the Empire, was meant of our Historian: it is he also, to whom *Plinius Novocomensis* addresses Seven of his Epistles, betwixt whom there was a friendship contracted, whilst the same *Pliny* was Proconsul of *Pontus*, and *Bithynia*, which our *Arrian* acknowledges to be the place of his Nativity. And if we may ascribe to him, those *Decisions of Law*, which *Ulpian*, and *Paulus* determin by his Authority: the knowledg of that learned Science may be added, to his excellency in Geography, History and Philosophy.

But one of the greatest Encomiums that can be given to any, is that which *Lucian* applies to him, when he excuses himself for writing the  
life

*Vossius de  
hist. grae-  
cis, c. 11.*

*Lib. 43.  
dig. tit. 3.  
leg. 1. par.  
4. et Lib.  
44. digest.  
tit. 7. dig.  
47. in  
Pseud.*



life, of his false Prophet *Alexander*: Let no man, saies he, blame me, for imploying my time, on so inconsiderable a Subject, since *Arrian*, that worthy Disciple of *Epictetus*, one of the greatest among the Romans, who hath exercised himself among the *Muses*, condescended to write the life of the *Villain Tilibornus*.

In Gordi-  
an.

It is not to be doubted but there are many *Arrians*, besides this person of whom we now write, for *Julius Capitolinus*, quotes one *Arrian*, a Greek Historian, to prove that there were three of the name of *Gordianus*, against the opinion of those, who pretend there were but Two; and this cannot be meant of our *Arrian*, who lived an Age, before the time of any of those Emperors: and *Suetonius* mentions a Poet of that name, more Antient than any of the others, because *Tiberius* is said to have imitated him, in his Greek Poesy. And perhaps, this may be the same *Arrian*, cited by *Suidas*, to be the Author of an Heroick Poem, divided into Four and Twenty Books, called *Alexandriades*, written to celebrate the Honour of *Alexander* the Great.

R E F L E C



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

### HISTORY

#### OF

# APPIAN

**A** *P F I A V* is so much the more considerable, amongst all those that have laboured in the Roman History, in that, besides the commendation which *Photius* gives him, to have, as truly as possible delivered his matter: He alone has particularly described their actions, according to the Provinces, and different Regions, wherein they were transacted: Not that he has, in this method, excelled all other Historiographers, for the most Ancient of them have alwaies followed the order of time, and related things annually done, in Countries very distant, one from the other.

But though *Appian* seems, in some things, to have affected an order, even contrary to Nature, not observed by any of the Ancients, yet it must be acknowledged, that his Method, in general,



*Notus de  
historiis  
græcis.  
l. 2. c. 13.*

is very useful, to express the things performed distinctly, and separately from each other, to represent, as to our view, all that passed in each Country, so that no way of writing is more instructive, and apter, in that respect, to content the mind of the Readers. We learn from *Suidas*, that his History, by an excellency of Title, was sometimes termed *Basilick*, or *Royal*. And his Roman History ( which he writ in Twenty Four Books, from *Aeneas*, and the *Taking of Troy*, to the Foundation of Rome ) contains, in the first thereof the Government of its Seven Kings, as may be conjectured by the Text of *Photius*. *Florus* his *Epitome* is indeed composed of Wars, and actions seperated one from the other ; but *Appian* has represented them more intirely, how long soever any of them endured ; whereas the *Other* confounds his relations , in the mixtures of them: as in the *First*, *Second*, and *Third Punic Wars*, he shuffles together all the affairs of the *Romans* with the *Gauls*, *Ligurians*, *Macedonians*, and many other People , with whom they had contest, in the interval of those Two cessations of Arms, which happened betwixt the *Carthaginians* and them.

But this favourable judgment of *Photius*, in *Appians* behalf, does not restrain *Bodin*; from accusing both his memory, and judgment in the matter of his History : for this bold Censurer asserts , that the *Romans* did never lend their Wives one to the other, according to the custom



itom of the *Parthians*, and *Lacedemonians*; and imputes therein too much credulity to *Appian*: Though *Plutarch* hath written the same thing, affirming that *Cato* freely sent his Wife, to *Hortensius* the Orator, to raise of her an issue to him: nor is the *Law of Romulus*, or that against *Adulterers*, mentioned by *Aulus Gellius*, repugnant to this practise (as *Bodin* unadvisedly imagins.) He taxes him likewise, to have made *Cæsar* say, in his *Second Book of the Civil Wars of Rome*, certain expressions, which were not uttered by him, but *Pompey*, in a threatening speech, which he used to the Senate, when he put his hand on his Sword, and told them, if they would not grant him the things he desired, that Sword should purchase them: but this may be ascribed to a failure of memory, to which all mankind is subject: as also another error, which he notes of him, in mistaking *Caipburnia*, for *Pompeia*, that Wife of *Cæsar*, which was vitiated in the Temple, called by the Roman, the *Temple of the good Goddess*. But *Sigonius* is more indecent who arraigns him of levity, and many omissions, without alledging any proof or instance thereof. And *Scaliger* is not less bold in the censure that he makes of him, in his *Animadversions* on the History of *Ensebins*, where he saies, he would appear to be a Child in the business of History, were it not that an infinity of matters are added to his Treatise of the Wars of *Syria*. Yet though I approve not of these reflections; I presume,

*In vita  
Cat. V.*

fume,



sume, one may truly impute it to him as a fault in all his works, that he too much flatters the Romans, alwaies making the right, as well as the advantage, to be on their side, to the prejudice of all other Nations in the world, with whom they were concerned, as well as of his own Native Country. And we may add to this, that he often attributes to himself the labours of others, transcribing many Paragraphs, and intire Sentences of *Polybins*, *Plutarch*, and other Authors more Antient, and inserting them in his Book, without citing their Texts, to render them that acknowledgment, which is due to their merit, on such occasions. And some affirm that he in like manner transcribed, the greatest part of the Commentaries of *Augustus*, which contained (as *Suetonius* relates) the principal actions of his life. This is indeed a sort of theft not to be allowed. *Deprehendi in furto male, quam mutuum reddere*. As *Pliny* saies to *Vestrian*, on the same subject, and *Scaliger*, on this occasion, calls him, *alienorum laborum fucum*, in resemblance to a certain sort of Flies, which nourish themselves with the honey of others.

I have read in some Author, that the *Rhodians*, when they had a purpose to honour the memory of any well deserving person, by having his Statue erected in some publick place, were used only to take the head from some of the old Statues in their City, and put a new one in the place of it, of the Figure of him they designed  
to



to represent. Those that steal from the writings of others, do the same thing as those *Rhodians* did, but in a more ridiculous fashion, for by putting their names to other mens Works, hoping thereby to acquire honour to themselves, they ordinarily, instead thereof, reap only shame and contempt, for so sordid a practise. This matter calls to my remembrance an abuse, which was put upon *Diomedes*, by his friend *Alcibiades*, to whom he committed the charge, of conveying his Horses to the *Olympick games*; for by changing the inscription which belonged to them, and making them to run in the name of *Alcibiades*, he took to himself the honour of the victory they acquired, which was not of small consequence at that time, and to compleat his deceit, was so unjust to retain them to himself, without ever making restitution to *Diomedes*, who trusted him therewith. What greater treachery can there be in respect to letters, than to ascribe to our selves, the productions of others, when instead of yeilding the glory to those, by whose thoughts we have profited, we would have those very conceptions pass, for the pure inventions of our own wit. The figurative expression of *Plagiary*, which the Latins give to those, that are guilty of a Crime so abject, and odious, sufficiently denotes the Abomination they had for it; as if, by the word *Plagium*, it were to be understood, that such offences could not be expiated, but by a Whip. *Vitruvius*, in the Preface

*crimen*  
*Plagium* &  
*Plagis* (1)  
*à dolore*  
*quo is affi-*  
*ciunt qui*  
*surreptus*  
*est. Cal.*



to his *Seventh Book of Architecture*, after having asserted, that such of whom we now treat, are to be punished, as impious, and infamous, he informs us, with what severity, and Ignominy, *Ptolomy* punished some Poets, that had been so impudent to recite, in a publick Assembly in *Alexandria*, certain Verses stoln by them, out of different Authors, and to expose them as their own; whereby they had carried the prize, (which the *King* proposed to be given them that best performed, by the suffrage of *Six* of the *Judges*, and all the *People*) if the *Seventh*, who was called *Aristophanes*, that had been more conversant in Books, than the other, had not discovered the abuse; preferring a *Poet*, before them, that was the least applauded of all the rest, but one that had pronounced nothing, in the Assembly, that was not of his own composition. *Theocritus* boasted, in one of his *Epigrams*, with a kind of assurance, that he never was of the number of those, that ascribed to themselves the Verses of other men, but I am not ignorant of the excuses, that many are forced to make in his behalf, for that very assertion. They tell us, that *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Eusebius* in his *Evangelical preparation*, report, that the Greeks did not only take from the Hebrews, that which is best in their Writings, but instanced in many examples, how they frequently borrowed from one another also.

*Strabo* writes of *Eudorus*, and *Ariston*, Two *Peripatetick Philosophers*, which had writ some  
*Commens.*

*Lib. 5. et*  
*6. Strom.*  
*Lib. 9.*  
*Cap. 2.*  
 & 3.

*Geogr.*  
*Lib. 17*



*Commentaries of Nilus*, so like in Phrase, and matter, that the *Oracle of Jupiter Hammon* only could discover, which of them was the true *Author*, upon their mutual accusations of one another, of the theft committed.

*Marcianus Heracleota* affirms, that *Eratosthenes* transcribed a Treatise, writ by one *Timasthenes*, of an Epitome of the Isles, from one end to the other, and published it as his own *Athenæus* defames *Plato*, about the end of the *Eleventh Book of his Deipnosophists*, to have taken the greatest part of his Dialogues, from *Byrson*, *Aristippus*, and *Antisthenes*. And though it be known, that *Apuleius* his *Golden Ass*, is not of his own Fabrick, it is not yet discovered, whether he took it from *Lucian*, or *Lucius Patrensis*, for both these have writ of the same Subject, and each of their peices pass as Originals. But all these examples, and many more that might be instanced, cannot produce the effect, which those that make them, promise to themselves; nor is it enough to excuse a fault, by saying many others are guilty of the like, for if that were sufficient, there is scarce any that would not be easily pardonable.

*Appian* lived in the time of *Trajan*, *Adrian*, and *Antoninus* Successive Emperors of Rome, and about the 140<sup>th</sup> year, of our Saviours Incarnation. In the Preface of his History, he declares his Extraction, to be from one of the best Families of *Alexandria*, from whence being



*Procurato-  
res Cæsa-  
ris, an Of-  
fice which  
resembles  
the charge  
of Attorney  
General in  
England.*

*\* Orsus ab  
Æneâ, et  
Ilio capto,  
percurrit  
illa tem-  
pora, usq;  
ad Roma-  
lum. Inde  
accuratus  
persequi-  
tur omnia  
usque ad  
Augustum.  
Quædam  
etiam car-  
pim atq;  
obiter ad-  
dit, usque  
ad Traja-  
num. Vos-  
sus loco  
citato.*

come to *Rome*, he rendered himself, in a short while, so considerable in the employment of Advocate, that he was elected, and inrolled in the number of those, that were the Proctors of the Emperor, and to have (as *Photius* relates) the Administration of a Province. *Sigonius*, and some others call him, *Sophista Alexandrinus*, and make him an *Egyptian*

His History was divided into Three Volumes (which as the same *Photius* mentions) contained Four and Twenty Books, or Twenty Two, as *Carolus Stephanus Volaterranus*, and the before named *Sigonius* inform.\* It began at the burning or taking *Troy*, and the fortune of *Æneas*, and extended beyond the Reign of *Augustus*, making sometimes excursions even to the time of *Trajan*. As to his Style, the same *Photius* observes, that as his manner of writing was plain and easie, so he had nothing in it, that was soaring high, or superfluous, and he gives to him the prerogative, of being not only very faithful (as we hinted in the beginning) but one of those, that has given the greatest Testimony, of his knowledg in the art of War, and all kind of military Discipline. To read the description of his battels would make one fancy himself in the middle of them. And he is so happy in his *Orations*, that he manages, and moves the affections, which way he pleases: whether it be to revive the courage of the drooping Sculdiers, or express the extravagant transports of those that are too violent

But



But of the many *works* which he composed, there remains to this time but the least part which describe the *Punick, Syrian, and Parthian Wars, Those against Mithridates, against the Spaniards, against Hannibal: and Five Books of the civil Wars of Rome, and those of Illyria*: As for that of the *Celtick War, or the War of the Gaules*, there is only a fragment or compendium of it extant, rather to make us regret what we want, than satisfy our minds with that which remains.

Thus far we have confined our self, in this Chapter of *Appian*, to *Monsieur de la Mothe le Vayer*, our Author, who in many things seems to me not so exact in his judgment of this Historiographer, as his merit requires, and too severe in his reflection, whilst he makes so long a defamatory digression, against those that incorporate the writings of others in their works, on occasion of the mention of his borrowing something, in his History, from *Polybius* and *Plutarch*, which he makes to be the more unpardonable, because he cites not, in his Books, the Texts of those Authors, to render them (as he phrases it) the acknowledgment due to their merit. And yet he himself, even in this Chapter, borrows some part of his matter from *Vossius*, without quoting him. But may it not be doubted, whether this *Gentleman* ever saw the *Original Manuscript of Appian*, where perhaps those Quotations were, to know thereby, whether he or those that transcribed it, are to be blamed for



this omission, or indeed whether, in those Ancient times, such citations were practised: for though the borrowing of writings from others, may be sometimes in some circumstances a great offence; it is not alwaies to be so accounted, since there is not any thing written, that is not taken from the conceptions of them that went before: and when we take from others to improve their reason, that it may be derived to us in a more familiar, refined and exquisite sense, it is rather commendable than faulty; as may be said of that which *Virgil* takes from *Homer*, or to speak of our time, of what our *Ben Johnson* extracts from *Catullus*, *Juvenal*, *Horace*, *Plautus*, and other *Poets*, and from *Tully* also, who so much improves their thoughts, that they themselves, if they were alive, would not think themselves dishonored, by the use he makes of them.

What our Author mentions of *Scaliger*, which is also hinted by *Vossius* of *Appians* being a Child in History, is rather to be imputed to his passion, than right judgment, whose censures are not alwaies to be allowed, especially when they contradict the more general consent of the learned in all Ages. What he saies also, in the beginning of this Chapter in one place, that *Appian* seems to have affected an order of writing, even contrary to Nature, is an opinion, wherein he is very singular, for *Calius Secundus Curio* (who had, it may be, more curiously studied *Appian* than he) in his *Epistle Dedicatory*, before the *Latin Impression*



pression at Basil 1554, writes thus of him

It is certain (saies he) that *Appian* proposed to himself, the method, and contexture of *Thucydides*, and *Salust*, and endeavoured to imitate them both, in their veracity of expression, and quickness of transition, for he did not weave together a perpetual series of History, as *Livy* and others, but from the whole matter (that is to say) from the greatest, most, and immortal actions of the Romans, he separated the Wars they made, upon any Nation or People; and made so many bodies of History, as they undertook and waged Wars, which Reason and image of writing *Cæsar* pursued, in his so much celebrated Commentaries, wherein nothing is found, empty, fabulous, or prodigious. No superfluous, or feigned speeches, or Orations for ostentation; but all pure, true, religious, and necessary; in which he did not imitate the Vanity of the Greeks, which to do, is not indeed to write a History, but deceive the World with Fables.

*Cælius -  
Secundus  
Curio, in  
Epistolâ  
Dedicatoriâ, ad Bonifacium  
Amberbachium,  
versus fene-*



# REFLECTIONS UPON THE HISTORY OF DIO OR DION CASSIUS

**D**IO Cassius, who is besides known by the Surnames of *Cocceius* and *Cocceianus*, was born at *Nicea*, a City of *Bithynia*, where he retired, in his latter years, to pass in quiet the remaining part of his life, after the example of those Animals, who alwaies return, as they say, to dy in their Mansions. The infirmity of his leggs called him to this retirement, and he writes, that his Genius had foretold it him long before by a Verse of *Homers Iliads*, recited by *Photius*. As *Socrates* was said to have had a *Familiar Spirit* or *Dæmon*, who was as a Director of his life, *Dio* alledges that he was warned by his, to avoid by a retirement, the Ambushes which the *Pretorian Militia* prepared for him: and



and the same *Spirit*, or *Goddeſs* ( to uſe his own terms in his Threescore and Twelfth Book ) made him write his Hiſtory , who before exerciſed himſelf only in Philoſophical learning as that of the *Divine Dreams* , and their *Interpretation*, of which he had compoſed a Book His Father *Apronianus* a *Conſular man* ( according to the *Homo Conſularis.* Phraſe of that Age ) was Governor of *Dalmatia*, and ſometime after Proconſul of *Cilicia* : He himſelf had the ſame Conſular dignity beſtowed on him twice, which he exerciſed jointly with the Emperor *Alexander*, Son of *Mammaea*; after he had paſſed through divers Employments under the precedent Emperors : for *Macrinus* had eſtabliſhed him Lieutenant or Governor of *Pergamus*, and *Smyrna*, and he ſometime commanded in *Affrick*; and had afterwards the Adminiſtration of *Auſtria* and *Hurgary*, then called *Pannonia*, committed to him. Theſe things are convenient to be known, before we ſpeak of his Writings , becauſe they recommend , and give the greater Authority to them. His Hiſtory comprized all the time from the building of Rome, to the Reign of *Alexander Severus*, which he writ in Eighty Books , divided into Eight *Decades* , whereof few are ſaved from that unhappy loſs, which, as we have elſewhere ſhown, has been fatal to many admirable Works of this nature, whereof the ignorant and barbarous Ages have deprived us At preſent the Five and Thirtieth Book is the firſt of thoſe that remain intire ( for

we



we have but some Eclogues or Fragments of the Four and Thirtieth preceding. His progress to the Sixtieth is intire enough. But instead of the last Twenty, we must be content with what *Xiphilinus*, a *Constantinopolitan Monk*, has given us in an Epitome or Compendium of them; for the Text of those peeces of *Dion* is not to be found whole, by a misfortune alwaies incident to Books, that are abbreviated. *Photius* observes, that he writ his *Roman History*, as some others had likewise done, not from the Foundation of Rome only, but even from *Aeneas* his Descent into *Italy*, which he continued to the Tyranny of *Heliogabalus*, and some part of the Reign of *Alexander Severus*, his successor. That which we have of it now in our possession, comprehending the events of Three Hundred years at least, begins but at the time, when *Lucullus* had his great commands, and finishes with the death of *Claudius* the Emperor: the rest is the Epitome of *Xiphilinus*, before mentioned.

*Lucullus lived about 71 years, before Christ, and about 23, before Julius Cæsar assumed the government of the Roman Empire.*

Though all that has been lost of this excellent Author, is much to be regretted, I think nothing is so deplorable, as the loss of the Forty last years, of which he writ as an Eye-witness, and one that had a part in the government of the State. For he could not express, what was before the Empire of *Commodus*, but from the relation of strangers, and as others had done it before him. But after that Emperor, until the other, with whom he had the honor, to be Colleague



league in the Consulship, he built no more upon the faith of other men ; but what he relates , that descends to us, by his *Organ Xiphilinus*, is no other than what he saw himself, and wherein he was a principal Actor. It is a clear proof of *Dion's* prudent conduct , that he could pass over such bad times, as those of the Tyrannical Dominion of *Commodus*, *Caracalla*, *Macrinus*, and *Severus*, without loss of life , goods, or reputation, which are often in danger under such Princes, without a wonderful dexterity of Wit. His was so commendable, that after having overcome those Stormy and Tempestuous seasons , wherein the quality of a stranger and his riches exposed him to much envy, he arrived happily at a safe Port, to wit the Reign of *Alexander Severus* an exceeding Lover of justice, and a most powerful Protector of virtuous men.

Under him he published the Roman History, to which as he was led by his *Genius*, as we before hinted , so he was commanded by *Septimius Severus*. He confesses himself, that he employed Ten years, in providing the necessary materials for this great building, and twelve more in raising it, and adding that Majesty unto it, which makes us , even at this day, admire its dismembred Fragments and Ruins. A man of his Quality, who had passed all his life in the management of affairs, and had read men as well as Books, and of such an experimented conduct, must needs have been a very considerable Historiographer



grapher Nor have any of them revealed so much unto us as he, of those state secrets, which *Tacitus* Stiles *Arcana Imperii*, and whereof he makes so high a Mystery He is so exact in describing the order of the *Comitia*, the establishing of Magistrates, and the use of the publick Rights of the *Romans*, that those things are no where else learned more distinctly. And in what relates to the Consecration of Emperors, *our Apotheosis*, or inrolling amongst the number of the Gods; We may say, that he is the only Writer, who has shewn us a good form, except *Herodian* who coveted afterwards to imitate him in the same Subject But particularly, in the Fifty Sixth Book, he is very curious, where he represents the Pomp of *Augustus* his Funerals, his Bed of State, his Effigies in Wax, and the Funeral Oration, which *Tiberius* read before the People, he exposes after that the manner of the burning his body, how *Livia* gathered, and laid up his Bones, finally with what dexterity they made an Eagle part from the *Funeral Pile*, whence that *Bird of Jupiter* seemed to bear the Soul of the Emperour to Heaven.

The Funeral Oration before mentioned obliges me to remark, that *Dion* freely used, not only the Oblique, but the Direct way of Oration also in the body of his History Those of *Pompey* to the *Romans*, and of *Gabinus* afterwards, in his Thirty Sixth Book, are of the last frame The Philosophical discourse of *Philiscus* to *Cicero*, which  
is



is seen in the Eight and Thirtieth , to perswade him to bear his Exile into *Macedonia* constantly, is also in the form of a *Prosopopæa*, after a very considerable Dialogue between them Two The Orations of *Agrippa* , and *Mecenas*, the first of which exhorted *Augustus* to quit the Empire , the Second on the contrary to retain it, are of the same sort, and contain the whole Fifty Second Book. And *Xiphilinus* was not contented, in his Abbreviation of the Sixty Second, to make *Paulinus*, Governor of great *Brittain*, speak a direct Oration to his Troops, ready to Engage with the Brittish Forces, after he had divided them into Three different Bodies , but makes him speak Three separate ones, on the same Subject , to perswade them to fight courageously , and thereby to obtain the Victory By this it appears, that they who believe that all sorts of Orations are indecent in History, will not be satisfied with *Dio's* method of writing, for he abstains not from those, which are most to be avoided, namely the direct; and has made use of Dialogues also. which is contrary to the rules of the Criticks in History ; but if we must take notice of his faults, there are others, which deserve sooner to be complained of, than what we mentioned. He is accused of having taken *Cæsars* part too much, against *Pompey*, to accomodate himself to the course of Fortune. Nor seems he more equitable in respect of *Antonius* his Faction, which he alwaies favours to the prejudice of that of *Cicero*.  
And



*Cicero*

And whoever reads in the Forty Sixth Book, the invective of *Q. Fusius Calenus*, against this incomparable Oratour, will be hardly able to indure all the injuries, with which it seems *Dio* would have Sullied his reputation. Not content to make him be reproached, that he was the Son of a Fuller or Dyer, very often reduced to dress Vines, or cultivate Olive Trees; he assaults his person, and touches his honour in all the most sensible parts: he renders him ridiculous for his fearfulness: and to blast him the more, affirms, that of all the Orations which were seen of his, he delivered not one of them, after the manner in which they were writ, and therefore his want of memory is imputed as a crime to him. But he makes *Calenus* much more severe, He would have him contented, not to wear the long Robe, if he had not wanted it to hide his ill-shapt Leggs and Feet. And a raings his Conjugal Bed, to expose the vice of his Wives, defaming him to have prostituted the honour of one of them: and in the mention of his Children, he accuses him of Incest with his Daughter; and represents his Son, as an infamous Libertin, Drunk Night and Day. Certainly, to treat one of the greatest perions of the Roman Republick thus, is rather like a Satyrist than an Historian. But *Dion* does so pursue his disparagement, that in the following Book, he takes a new occasion to make *Fulvia*, the Wife of *Antonius*, vomit out abundance of reproaches against his memory, who pierces his  
Tongue



Tongue through and through with her Needle.

He has not been much more respectful to *Seneca*, if the conjectures of some men are not true, who think that *Xiphilinus*, in that part, maliciously delivered the thoughts of *Suillius*, or some other as bad, for those of *Dio*. Yet we read in what *Constantinus* collected out of him, besides what is related in the Epitomy of *Xiphilinus*, that *Seneca* led a life quite contrary to his Writings, and the Philosophical profession, to which he pretended. He is accused of Adultery, with *Julia* and *Agrippina*, and of the death of the last. He is taxed with reading Lectures of *Pederasty*, to *Nero*, and charged with ascending the *Theatre* with him, to make Orations in his applause. In fine his Luxury and Avarice are aggravated to that pitch, that the cause of the Rebellion of *Great Britain*, is imputed to him, where the People could no more indure his extortion, than *Nero* could suffer his Conspiracies, from which he had no means to deliver himself, than by putting so bad a Matter to death. But what we before hinted, that the invectives against *Seneca*, are rather the words of *Tigellinus* the abbreviator, than our Author, seems to be very manifest, because *Dion*, in his Fifty Ninth Book, speaks very honourably of *Seneca*. Lib. 60.

We might perhaps accuse him of Superstition and Credulity, and thereby something discredit his History; if something were not to be allowed to Humanity, and if we did not know, that the  
best



\* These  
Psylli are  
mention-  
ed, to have  
been im-  
ployed by  
Augustus  
Cæsar, to  
cure Cleo-  
patra of  
her poison,  
by sucking  
the venome  
out of her  
wounds,  
that he  
might car-  
ry her in  
Triumph  
to Rome.  
Sueton. in  
Aug. c. 17.  
Lib. 66.  
Lib. 67.  
A City of  
Cappado-  
cia.

best Authors in this kind, have fallen into the same inconveniences. In his Forty Seventh Book he tells us, the Sun appeared at *Rome* sometimes lesser, and sometimes greater than ordinary, to foretel the bloody Battel, fought in the *Fields of Philippi*, which was also signified by many other Prodigies. How he credited the report of the strange quality of the \* *Psylli*, to expel poison, may be read in his One and Fiftieth Book, on the Subject of the death of *Cleopatra*, whom these men (since there was no Female amongst them, and they begot themselves) endeavoured in vain, to bring to life again. In his Fifty Eighth Book he reports, that a *Phoenix* was seen in *Ægypt*, in the Seven Hundred and Nineteenth year of the Foundation of *Rome*. In another place he writes, that *Vespasian* cured a Blind Man, by spitting in his Eies, and worked a like *Miracle*, on a Lame mans Hand, which he cured and restored to its vigour, by walking upon it, they being both forewarned in a Dream, that they should receive this benefit from the Emperor. In another place he expresses, that the famous *Apollonius Tyanæus* saw, in the City of *Ephesus*, all that passed at the death of *Domitian* in *Rome*, at the same instant that he received it; so that he cried out, calling on the name of *Stephanus*, which was that of his Murtherer, bidding him *Strike boldly* and soon after that (saies he) it was done; as if *Dion* would have conformed himself to *Philostratus*, who writ at the same time the *Imagi-*  
nar



*nary life* of this Philosopher ; and as if there were no difference to be put, betwixt true, and Fabulous History.

*V. Lib. 8  
de Vita  
Apol. c. 10*

Though some men, and *Baronius* amongst others, find fault with *Dio*, because he was not favorable to Christianity, I think it not worthy to be considered, since he is to be esteemed as a *Pagan* Author, who was not like to uphold a Religion contrary to that which he professed. It is true that speaking of the victories of *Marcus Aurelius*, he attributes to the Magick Art, of one *Arnuphis* an *Aegyptian*, rather than to the prayers of the Christians, the miraculous Rain, which fell in favour of the Romans, and the strange Tempests, which afflicted the Army of the *Quadi*, whom the learned *Cluverius* takes for the present *Moravians*. But is it a wonder, in things subject to various interpretations, as are ordinarily such Prodigies that *Dio*, an Idolatrous Historian, should not give the same judgment, as a believer? And that he spake otherwise of them, than *Tertullian*, *Eusebius*, *Paulus Diaconus*, and some others have done?

*Ad Ann.  
Chr. 176*

His Stile is by *Photius*, put into the rank of the most elevated, being extraordinarily raised by the loftiness of his thoughts. His discourse, saies he, is full of Phrases, which resemble the Antient construction or Syntaxis, and his expression answers the greatness of the matter he treats of. His periods are often interrupted with Parentheses, and he uses many Hyperbates, or transi-



tions, which are very troublesome when they are not used Artificially after his manner. But one thing is very remarkable, that though his language is very numerous, and adjusted according to Art, yet it appears to be so little laboured, that the Reader does in no wise perceive the care that has been taken in it, because it is so clear and intelligible, that every one presupposes as much facility in the composition, as there is in the reading. He seems to have imitated *Thucydides*, whom he follows, especially in his Narratives, and Orations: But he has the advantage over him, not to be reproached with obscurity: In all else *Thucydides* is the pattern, by which he Copies with all sort of Circumspection. This is the judgment *Photius* gives of him, who is much more creditable in this point, than *Sigonius*, that to say something of his own, long since thought on, accuses *Dio* of being too *Asiatick*, and so prolix in his Orations, that he is troublesome to his Readers. The world must be left to their liberty of thinking, according to the Law of the Romans, *Populo libera sunt suffragia*. Yet I conceive, for what relates to language, the surest way is to leave that to those to whom it is natural, and who have sucked it with their milk, rather than to strangers, who are much more subject to be mistaken.

Besides *Dio's* History, and his little Treatises before mentioned, it seems that *Suidas* ascribes to him, some other compositions, as the *life* of the *Philosopher Arrianns*, the *actions* of *Trajan*,  
and



and certain *Itineraries*. *Raphael Volaterranus* makes him besides, Author of Three Books, intituled *de Principe*, and some small Treatises of *Morality*.

We must also observe, that there have been many *Dio's* of great repute; and one amongst the rest, who lived an Age before *Dio Cassius*, in the same Emperor *Trajan's* time. This is he, who for his Eloquence, had the Surname of *Chrysostomus*, who was of *Prassia*, and by consequence of *Bithynia*, as well as the other, and for whom *Trajan* had so particular a Love, that he often honoured him with a place by him in his Chariot. These Two *Dions* are distinguished, by their professions, as well as their Surnames. The *first*, according to the times they lived in, was an Oratour, and Philosopher, the *Second*, an Historian, and Statesman, such as we have represented him in this Section.



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# HERODIAN

**T**HE History of *Herodian* ( as most of those we have already mentioned ) receives its commendation, from the merit of its Author. He declares at the beginning of his first Book, that he will only write of the affairs of his own time , which he himself hath seen , or understood from creditable persons ; for which he was very competent , because of the publick employments that he exercised , for he might justly boast, to have passed through the principal charges of the State.

About the end of his Second Book , he acquaints us ) before he begins to write of the life of *Septimius Severus*, which contains all the Third Book ) that his History in general shall comprehend the space of Seventy years, and treat of the Government of all the Emperors, which succeed-



succeeded one another, during that time, that is, from the Reign of *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus* the Philosopher, to that of the younger *Gordianus* Grandchild of the former, which some, with *Julius Capitolinus*, reckon to be the Third of that name. His Eighth Book, which is the last of his Work, ends with the unworthy slaughter of the Two old men *Balbinus*, and *Pupienus*, whom he calls *Maximus*, committed on them by the *Prætorian* Souldiers, to advance the fore-mentioned *Gordianus Junior* to the Throne.

A Latin Historian.

Two Roman Emperors killed at Rome A.D. 237.

*Photius* writes of his Stile, that he has writ in an Air so much the more cleer and agreeable, in that he has not too much affected the *Attick* terms; but so tempered his Phrase, that his discourse is heightned above the lower form of Oration: and as there is nothing superfluous in his writings, so it cannot be said, that he has omitted things necessary or useful to be known: and he adds (to compleat his Elogium of him) that considering all the virtues of an Historian, there are few Authors to whom *Herodian* ought to subscribe.

We have observed in the preceding Sections, that he hath, as well as *Dion Cassius*, informed us of the Pagan Ceremonies, used at the Consecration of their Emperors. It is in the beginning of his Fourth Book, where he so well represents to us all the Funeral honours, rendered to the Ashes of *Severus* (which his Children had transported from *England*, in an Alabaster Chest)



Chest) that it is hard to see any where, any thing more exact, and more instructive. He tells us how they were put into an Urne, with the general adoration of the Senate and the People, and carried by the Consuls to the Temple, where the Sacred Monuments of their Emperors were preserved, and then proceeding to describe the Funeral Pomp, he informs us, that his Effigies in Wax, all cloathed in Robes of Gold, was placed at the Gate of his Palace on an Ivory Bed, elevated from the Ground, and magnificently adorned: Where Seven daies together the Senators clothed in black, and the Roman Ladies all in White (without any other Ornaments) came to pay their respects, taking their places, the Women on the right, and the men on the left side of the Bed, all appearing with very mournful countenances. He observes also, that the Physicians came duly to visit this representation of the Emperor, making formal approaches to the Bed, as if he were alive, and declaring that his sickness grew daily worse and worse; so true it is that this world is a continual Comedy. After this time was passed over, the most considerable of the Youth, and the Knights, carried the same Bed on their shoulders, first to the great Market places, where the Magistrates of Rome used to Surrender their charges; and there a Chorus of young men on one side, and Virgins on the other, Sung Hymns to the praise of the dead Emperor: from thence they proceeded to the

*universis  
Mundus  
exercet  
Historiam,  
Sen.*



the *Campus Martius*, which was out of the Town, where the Bed, and Effigies, were placed in a large square *Tabernacle* of Wood, resembling and elevated, to the height of one of those *Towers*, upon which Lights are placed on the Sea Coasts, to direct Mariners to avoid the dangers of Rocky shores, whereof he makes such exact descriptions, both as to the exterior and interior Ornament, and the several stories of it, that any one may easily thereby comprehend the manner of the structure. In the next place he writes that the Roman Knights made their Horses run round about the *Tabernacle* in certain orderly motions, which were at that time called *Motus Pyrrhichii*, and in orbicular revolutions. And at the same time there were a certain number of Chariots, filled with persons which represented the most qualified men of the Empire, which also went in a kind of Procession, round the great *Machine*, till the next successor of the Emperor, first took a Torch in his hand, and with it kindled some combustible matter, made for that purpose at the bottom of it, and then in a little time all that *Superbe Edifice* was consumed in Flames, and at the same time they let an Eagle fly, which the Pagan superstition of that Age believed, was to carry away the Soul of the deceased.

*Pharos  
vulgo  
dict.*

*Herodian* used direct Oration in all his History. As in the first Book we have that of *Marcus Antoninus* to his friends, a little before his death:



death: with another which *Commodus* delivered to his souldiers ( whilst he was yet very young.) to gain their affections to him And his Eighth Book does as it were conclude, with that speech which *Maximus* made in the middle of his Army, a little before he marched with it to *Rome* : and all his other Books are filled with the like discourses, which are leaning to the form of Declamation, and which without any difficulty he continually used as occasion offered ; as may be seen by that letter which *Macrinus* writ from *Antioch*, to the Senate and Roman People, in the beginning of his Fifth Book.

He did not moreover avoid Digressions in his Compositions. There is one in his first Book, on the occasion of that *Idol of the Mother of the Gods*, which the Romans caused to be brought from *Phrygia* ; after having related that the Stone, all ingraven as it was into the form of the *Image*, fell down from Heaven, in the *Field of Tefinunta*, and made the Ship that carried it stop at the Mouth of *Tyber*, till a *Vestal* in proof of her *Virginity* had drawn it out with her cincture : and he gives no other reason for the Sacrifices, which the *Eunuchs* celebrated to such a Divinity, and many other Fables which depended thereon ( in this whole diversion ) than that, writing in *Greek*, he thought it might be acceptable to his Country men, to be informed of the Theology of the *Latins*, whereof few of them had any knowledg

*Julius*



*Julius Capitolinus* mentions *Herodian*, in the *Life of Clodius Albinus*, as a good Historian, but accuses him nevertheless, in his *two Maximins*, to have favoured one, in hatred of *Alexander Severus*, whose memory was displeasing to him. He did indeed commend the clemency and mild disposition of that Prince, who reigned Fourteen years, without any effusion of blood, and without taking away the life of any one, otherwise than by the ordinary course of Justice, which he remarks as a virtue very rare, and without example, since *Antoninus Philosophus*.

He was an Historian, that wrote many Books, whereof some are lost, by the injury of the times. He lived in the time of Diocletian the Emperor. Voss. de Hist. Lat. Lib. 1. Cap. 7.

As to the Empress *Mammaea* (who is proposed by some, as a Pattern to those to whom the Education of such Princes, which they shall have brought into the World, may appertain) he by no means approved of her Government; sometimes he described her as an avaritious person, that invaded the possessions of many persons, by evil and fraudulent means, and saies, she was for that reason hated by her Son. And then he represents her to be so proud, that she could not endure her Daughter in Law *Augusta*, impatient to have the Title of Empress given to any but her self, but banished her into *Affrick*, after having caused her Father to be put to death, against the consent of the Emperor; because he made publick complaints of the wrongs, he, and the young Empress *Augusta* his Daughter had endured by the cruelty of the same *Mammaea*: nor was the less injurious to her Son, who, when he



he regretted the defeat of a Roman Army, which was too far advanced into the Country of the *Parthians*, could not but impute the dishonor of it to her, who on pretext of her care, which persuaded him not to hazard his person, was thereby the occasion of the loss of that Army, and all the reproach and infamy that attended it. Nor does *Herodian* assign any other cause of the death of both the Mother, and the Son, who were assassinated by the Souldiers, than the hatred they had conceived against *Mammaea*, because of her insatiable avarice and shameless parcimony, whereby *Maximinus* was advanced to the Empire.

*Lampridius* also, after having called *Mammaea* a pious Woman, does not refrain from arraigning the impudence of her avarice, for amassing together all the Gold and Silver she could gather. And when he relates the assassinate of *Alexander Severus*, he saies, that Prince was grievously reproached by his Murtherers, with the covetousness of his Mother. And *Sextus Aurelius Victor* declines not, to have it pronounced to that unfortunate Emperor, at the last moment of his life; that the same person which gave it to him, was the cause of his death. And he adds that *Mammaea* had reduced her Son to that extremity, by her frugal humour, that the meat which was untouched at the Table one day, was saved to be served to it the day following, to content her, though at best it was but meanly furnished.

But



But though *Herodian* justly blamed *Mammaea*, for her ill conduct in the matter of Government of the State, he very much commends her care for the instruction of her Son, excluding from him all depraved persons, and especially those *Pests of Courts*, which flatter the bad inclinations of Princes, and thereby pervert their nature, and immediately vitiate their understandings : she would let none approach him, that were not virtuous in their lives, and of approved behaviour : and so discreetly regulated his time, that it was chiefly occupied, in employments worthy of him, not permitting any leisure for indecent actions, which are begotten and nourished by idleness, as their proper Aliment. Certainly these wise precautions cannot be sufficiently prized, and do well deserve those commendations which are ascribed to this unhappy *Princess*. Nor was her vigilance, and the great pains she took, to preserve her Son from so vile a Monster as *Heliogabalus* ( who tried alwaies, to deprive him of his life ) less praise worthy, as *our Historian* observes. And *Lampridius*, who, as it was before hinted, commended her piety of life ; adds to it, that never any Prince was better educated, than *Alexander Severus*, in all the exercises of peace and War, by the excellent *Masters* she provided for him. And he finishes his discourse of the life of that Emperor, in saying he was of a very good disposition, being the Son of a most virtuous Mother. *Zosimus* relates that the Animosity of  
the



He was  
Secretary  
of State,  
to Theod-  
ore King  
of Italy,  
A.D. 514. he  
wrote many  
Books, and  
died in a  
Monastery  
in Cala-  
bria, to  
which he  
retired:  
Le grand  
dictionnaire  
de Morere.

the Souldiery, against *Mammaea* and her Son, proceeded from her favour to *Ulpian* the famed *Laxyr*, preferring him above the Captain of the Emperors Guards, which is no small proof of the zeal she had, to maintain the Laws. *The Chronologer Cassiodorus* reports, that the piety and respect which *Alexander* had for his Mother *Mammaea*, made him to be beloved by all men. But *Eusebius* has surpassed all others in her commendation, extolling her to be a Lady of virtue and piety, in a more religious sense than that of *Cassiodorus*, and equal to, if not exceeding therein, all the Women of her time, and he improves that his good opinion of her to us; because of her sending for *Origen* from *Antioch*, to confer with him of the mysteries of Christianity.

What shall we then conclude of the bad reports which *Herodian* writes of her may we not believe, with *Julius Capitolinus*, that as he was displeased with the Government of *Alexander Severus*, he for that reason arraigned the Qualities of his Mother, or rather that in a mixture of virtues and vices wherewith *Mammaea* was taxed, he would suppress neither of them, to acquit himself the better of the duty of an Historian; which last I take to be the most equitable opinion.

Though we consider *Herodian* in this place, but as an Historian, *Suidas* informs us that he wrote many other Books, which are not preserved to our time. He was Originally a Grammarian of *Alexandria*, and lived in the Three Hundredth year  
of



of *Christ*, the Son of one *Apollonius*, surnamed *Difficilis* of the same profession: and perhaps it is for this reason that *Ammianus Marcellinus* calls him, *Asium minutissimum seiscitatorem*. However, he passed the best part of his life at *Rome*, in the Courts of the Emperors. where he had the means to inform himself (with that curiosity which appears in his writings) of many excellent particulars, which are no where else to be found.



# REFLECTIONS UPON THE HISTORY OF ZOSIMUS.

THEY who with *Sigonius* make no distinction, between the Historian *Zosimus*, and *Two* or *Three* others of the same name, commit in my opinion an inexcusable fault. For *Suidas* names *Two*; the *First* an *Alexandrian*, that had, amongst other his Works, writ the *life of Plato*; and the *Second*, of *Gaza*, or *Ascalon*, who commented upon the writings of *Demosthenes*, and *Lysias*, in the time of the Emperor *Anastasius*. We ought not therefore to confound this last *Zosimus*, with the *Historian*, who (as *Evagrius* expressly affirms, in his invective against him) lived under *Theodosius the younger*. Neither do I know, why we should take the *Alexandrian* for the same Historian, their writings being quite different, and the Quality of *Count*, and *Advocate of the Treasury* where-

with

Lib. 3.  
Eccl. Hist.  
Cap. 41



with the *last* was dignified, was not attributed to the *other* by *Suidas*, who gives him only the Title of *Philosopher*. *Balthasar Bonifacius* would have it that the Historian *Zosimus* wrote a Chymical Book of the *Transmutation of Metals*, which he heard was kept in that excellent *Library Royal of Paris*: But he is mistaken in his conjecture, for the Manuscript he mentions, which I have examined, is of one *Zosimus*, who styles himself *Panopolitanus*, and is indeed a counterfeit name; a practise usual among Chymists, who delight so to deceive one another, by writings, which they ascribe falsely, sometimes to *Democritus*, sometimes to *Zosimus*, and sometimes to others, to give them the better Authority. But the History of *Zosimus* has no resemblance to those compositions. If we may believe *Photius*, it may have some affinity, with *Eunapius* his *History of the Cæsars*, which *Zosimus* is said to have merely abridged, so great a likeness there was between one and the other, except in those places where *Stilico* was concerned, whose reputation *Zosimus* did not defame as *Eunapius* did; whereof we might more particularly relate, if the *Venetians* had made publick the Manuscript, which we are assured they have of *Eunapius* his History. *Zosimus* as *Evagrius* reports left in his History in six Books, whereof the first comprehends all the *Cæsars* from *Augustus* to *Probus*, and was by the Author continued to *Diocletian*; but the matter is so contracted and succinct that nothing

*L. de Romæ  
hist. scr.*

*Histor. Ec-  
cles. l. 3.  
cap. 41.*



thing can be more: the Five other Books are larger, especially when he comes to the time of *Theodosius the Great*, and of his Children *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, because he then writ of what he had seen. He goes but a little beyond the Siege which *Alaricus* laid to *Rome*; and the occasions of division which some Sowed between *Honorius* and him. And indeed we have but the beginning of the Sixth Book, the end being lost. But I know not upon what Authority *Sigonius* builds, to assert that there was a Seventh Book of *Zosimus* his History, which was also lost, since *Photius* mentions but Six, and no other person saies any thing of a Seventh.

Lib. 16.  
Eccl. Hist.  
Cap. 41.  
set.

We hinted before, that there was an Invektive of *Evagrius* against *Zosimus*, which may be seen more at large in *Nicephorus Callistus*, *Photius* saies indeed that he barks like a Dog, at those of our Christian belief. And few Christian Authors, till *Leunclavius* who translated his History into Latin, made any Apology for him: To say the truth although this learned German defends him very pertinently in many things, showing that they were to blame to require of a Pagan Historian, as *Zosimus* was, other thoughts than those he exposed; or that he should refrain from discovering the vices of the first Christian Emperors, since he also had not concealed their virtues. Nevertheless it may be said, that, in many places, he expressed more Animosity, in that behalf, than the Laws of History do permit. Yet  
I think,



I think, he had reason to reproach *Constantin*, of that imposition of *Chrysargyr* or glistering Gold, which *Anastasius* afterwards removed, and that his duty obliged him to arraign his luxury and prodigality: nor was it a fault to have accused him, of having made his wife *Fausta* to be smothered in too hot a love, after he had commanded through Jealousie his own Son *Crispus* to be put to death: Perhaps *Eusebius* writing in this *Constantine's* time, or at the latest in that of his Son *Constantius*, durst not publish such bold truths, as it happens to those who expose any relations, wherein the Governing powers are interested. Nor is it unknown, that *Constantine* committed several other actions worthy of blame. He repealed from Exile the *Arch Heretick Arius*, to gratify his Sister *Constantia*; and banished *St Athanasius* to *ryers*, to the great prejudice of Christianity. But nevertheless *Zosimus* cannot be excused, who as much as in him lay, made an ill interpretation of all the actions of this Prince: who made himself a Christian, if you believe him, only because he was told, that Paganism had no faculty to wash away so many crimes as he had committed; and therefore he resolved by the advice of a certain *Aegyptian*, to imbrace the Christian Religion, which promised an absolution of all sorts of offences. But this assumption is as if *Zosimus* had penetrated into the inward thoughts of *Constantine*, and all those graces with which his Soul might be filled, by

*Lib.*



the liberality of Heaven. Moreover, when he speaks of the differences he had with his Brother in Law *Licinius*, he laies all the blame on him, as one that never kept his word. And he is not content to say, that *Constantin* caused him to be strangled in *Thessalonica*, violating thereby his faith given to the Wife of this unhappy person; but it was his usual stile, to take hold of all occasions to blast his reputation to the world.

And yet it is not on the Subject of *Constantin* alone, that his passion is seen against Christianity. He attributes the fall of the Roman Empire, to the contempt of the Ancient Pagan Religion, and principally to their neglecting in *Diocletian's* time, the celebration of the *secular Plays*. And to the misfortunes which happened to *Gratian*, he assigns no other cause, than his refusal as a Christian, to be the *Pontifex Maximus* of the Gentils, for which even *Constantin*, saies he, had no aversion. When *Theodosius* exhorted the Roman Senate, to quit the worship of Idols, declaring, that he would no more go to the charge of Sacrifices; he put this answer into the mouths of all the Senators, that there was no reason to oblige them to abandon a Religion, wherein they had prospered, during Twelve Hundred years, to follow an unreasonable faith, to which it was intended they should be compelled. The injurious description of the *Monackal Order*, which he said, did appropriate to its self all the wealth of the Nation, under a pretext of

Lib. 2.

Lib. 4.

Lib. 5.



of making the poor partake of it, is no small proof of his Animosity. He called that *Olympius*, an Hypocrite, and wicked man, who was the cause of the ruine of *Stilico*, as well to make him alwaies pass for innocent, as because the other was a Christian of great esteem, as may be seen by *Two Letters*, which *Saint Augustin* writ to him. In fine, no person, in my opinion, ought to believe him; when he does not only represent *St John Irysostome*, as a Seducer of the people; but affirms that Pope *Innocent* the First, whom he names, *πολεως ἐπισκοπον υρ- bis Episcopum*, permitted Pagan Sacrifices to be made, for the safety of *Rome*, whilst *Alaricus* besieged it. Ep. 12.  
& 129.

*Zosimus* his aversion to Christians will be less wondered at, when one considers what deference he had, to all the Superstitions of Idolatry, which made him tell many tales, that I should think unworthy of History, if I had not already observed, that the like are found even in those, who have writ with the greatest reputation. In the first Book, after the taking of *Zenobia* by *Aurelian*, he recites the Oracles, and shews the Prodigious, which did forerun the ruine, of the *Palmyrenians* her Subjects. And in a Famine towards the *Rhine*, he makes corn enough to fall from Heaven to make bread, and by that means render the Legions of the Emperor *Probus* victorious. The Fable of that *Valepius*, who was warned by a voice, to Sacrifice to *Ceres*,



and *Proserpina*, is seen in his Second Book : And in the Fourth he alledges, that the Sacrifices offered to *Achilles* by one *Nestorius*, defended *Athens*, and all the *Athenian Territory* from a great Earth-quake, after the death of *Valentinian*. In the Fifth, he pretends that the same City was again saved, by the Apparition of that *Hero*, and of *Minerva* who pacified the mind of *A. aricus*, which I leave to the learnrd *Baronius* to refute. He mentions *Two Statues*, one of *Jupiter*, and the other of that *Daughter* of his, to be miraculously preserved from a fire, happening in *Arcadius* his Reign, in *Constantinople* : and all the misfortunes which overwhelmed the House of *Stilico*, to proceed from the imprecations of a Vestal, because his Wife *Serena* had the temerity to adorn her self, with one of *Rhea's* attires for the head ; and also because she took her Collar, the impiety was punisht with a Cord, wherewith *Serena* being strangled, suffered Death in that part which seemed to be most culpable.

May it not then be reasonable to avouch, that infidelity has made *Zosimus* write many things, either in favour of his Altars whose destruction he was unwilling to see, or against ours which he could not indure, to the prejudice of his History : and that we might be therefore induced to despise it, if it did not contain some curious matters, which are not learned elsewhere. And it is certain that laying aside the excess of sharpness and Animosity, which  
he

Ad. Ann.  
Chr. 395.  
art. 16.



he showed against the first Christian Emperors; it is injustice to take it ill, that he noted their defects, when he omitted not, as hath been said, to praise their virtues, as may be seen, in what he expressed, both of *Theodosius*, and *Constantine*. Was he not obliged in duty, to reproach the Children of the last, with their strange cruelties, in spilling the blood of their nearest Relations? And can we think it strange, that he should exhibit the successors of the First in their lively colours? *Arcadius*, to make the same Allusion, which *Leunclavius* used, *was a true Animal of Arcadia*. His brother *Honorius* was no better: and both miserably possessed by Women, and Eunuchs, who abused their Authority, and were the cause of so many disgraces in the Roman Empire, that its ruin has not a more certain *Epoche*, than the time of their dominion. *Zosimus* had then been faulty, if he had not instructed us in all this, and they are much to blame, who bear him an ill will for having done it.

*His* Style is recommendable, in the judgment of *Photius*, for its purity, and that agreeable sweetness, which ordinarily accompanies that which is writ intelligibly. His sentences are short, and his phrase concise, as they ought to have been, since he brought into a narrower compass, what others had more diffusely exposed before him. It is also for this reason, that *Photius* observes his language to have rarely had any figures,



which are not proper to the manner of writing that he used. He likewise refrained from Orations, and all those Ornaments which only become high Eloquence: and we cannot but acknowledg, that he is no way comparable to those first Historians which we have already examined.

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REFLEC.



# REFLECTIONS UPON THE HISTORY OF PROCOPIUS.

**P**ROCOPIUS was a person of great fame in the Reign of *Justinian* the Emperor, he was Secretary to *Belisarius*, all the time when that renowned General was imploied in the Wars of *Persia*, *Affrick*, and *Italy*; and described the actions of many of them. He was both an Oratour and a Rhetorician, and no mean Historian. His History contains Eight books, Two of the *Persian War*, epitomized by *Photius* in the Sixty Third Chapter of his *Bibliotheca*: Two, of the Wars of the *Vandals*: and Four, of that of the *Goths*: Of all which there is a kind of Compendium, in the Preface of *Agathias*, who began his History, where *Procopius* left. But besides these Eight Books, *Suidas* mentions a Ninth, which comprehends matters not before published, and he calls it his *αἰνέσματα* or *inedita*, which



is an invective against *Justinian* and his Wife *Theodora*: and those *inedita* were by *Vossius* thought to be lost; though there have been of late some Editions of them, as will hereafter appear.

He is said, to have used in his History, both oblique and direct Orations, and all such as he believed, might make him approach the method and manner of the Ancients; yet he, as well as *Zosimus*, came far short of them. That which induces me to put him in the Rank of the precedent, is, that I conceive, he may pass, with *Agathias* who follows next, for the Two last Pagan Historians that have writ in Greek, of whom in our time there remain any thing considerable. I know that many take him for a Christian Author: and that in some passages of his works, especially in the Treatise he made of the Edifices of *Justinian*, he speaks like the Christians of his time. But there are other passages in his writings, so contrary to that doctrine; and the opinion of those that believe he is an *Ethnick*, is founded upon such strong considerations, that I cannot but yield to it. For not insisting upon his seeming in many places, to esteem Fortune a great *Goddeſs*: and not minding the strange Animosity which he shewed against *Justinian*, grounded partly upon the interest of Religion: that place alone in his First Book of the *Wars* of the *Goths*, where he speaks of the Ambassadors which the Emperor sent to the Bishop of *Rome*, to reconcile the different opinions of Christian,

is



is sufficient to undeceive those who considered him as a Christian Historian. I will not trouble my self, saies he to relate the Subject of such controversies, ( although it is not unknown to me ) because I hold it a meer folly to covet to comprehend the Divine Nature, and understand what God is. Human wit knows not the things here below, how then can it be satisfied in the search after Divinity? I let alone therefore such vain matter, and which the credulity of man only causes to be respected; contenting my self with acknowledging, that there is one God full of bounty, who governs us, and whose power stretches over this whole Universe. Let every one therefore believe what he thinks fit, whether he be a Priest and tyed to Divine Worship, or a man of a private and secular condition. How could he more plainly deride all our Theology, and the zeal of the Fathers of the Church, who were then busied in suppressing the Heresie of the *Arrians*, in what relates to the Second person of the Trinity? His discourse expresses him to be a perfect *Deist*, who thought, as many other Philosophers have done ( and amongst the rest that *Melissus* in *Hesychius* ) that one could determin nothing of God but rashly, and that it was impossible to have any knowledg of him. How can it be imagined, that such a man was a Christian, who founded his whole belief of Heavenly matters upon such erroneous maxims? If we add to this, the marks of Pagan Superstition which appear in all his books, we shall be hardly able

Απο ποί-  
ας μαγί-  
ας.



able to distinguish him from the most profane of the *Gentils*. The Tale he tells in the first book of the *Persian War*, of the Artifice sed by some of the *Magi*, to make One *Arsaces* confess the truth, is of this strain. They covered one half of a bordered Floor with *Persian* Earth, and the other with *Armenian*, and both of them conjured in such a sort, that when *Arsaces* was upon the last half which was that covered with his country Earth, he confessed all that he had denied upon the other. In the following Book, he relates that some *military Ensigns* turned of themselves, from the West to the East, presaging thereby the city wherein the Inhabitants of *Antioch* fell. He makes King *Genzerich*, in the first Book of the *War* of the *Vandals*, to understand by the flight of an *Eagle* upon the head of *Martianus*, that he should be one day Emperor. And he reports, that *Attila* ready to quit the Siege of *Aquileia*, staid his enterprise upon seeing a Stork carry its young ones out of the City. And in the same Book he relates one of his dreams, which was the most vain that sleep could form; and yet to testify how much he relied on it, he confesses that nothing but that made him resolve on his Sea Voyage with *Belisarius*. Nor are his Writings concerning the War with the *Goths*, less exempt from such like superstition wherein he makes a Jew foretel, by Thirty Hogs the ruin of the *Goths* in *Italy*: and *Constantin* bury in the chief Market-place of the City (which



( which bears his name ) that renowned *Palladium* of *Aeneas*, purposely transported thither from *Rome*. Which wild relations have no conformity with the purity of Christian Religion.

But since we have mentioned something of that ill will *Procopius* bore to *Justinian*, which ~~he~~ made so visible in his *Anecdota*, it is expedient to examin that work a little; because it is the place from whence, those who pretend to defame this Emperor, have alwaies collected their detractions. If we make it apparent that *Procopius* was much to blame, ~~so~~ so defamatory a Satyr against his Sovereign; we shall at the same time render those aspersions inconsiderable which others have cast upon his reputation. The word *Anecdota* imports that it was a secret work, and that the Author thereof had no mind to be known. He is judged to have composed it, in the Two and Thirtieth year of the Empire of *Justinian*, and left it imperfect, as well because he repented that he was so far transported, as for the satisfaction he received in his Stipend ( which was then paid him ) and many other favours which he obtained. He had complained in several places before that one, that the Salaries of such serviceable men as he were detained: and it was an insupportable grief unto him, to see himself excluded from those honorable places and employments above Thirty years, to which others were admitted, whole desert he thought no way equal to his.



his, Lastly having been *Belisarius* his Secretary, during all the Wars of *Persia*, *Affrick*, and *Italy* (as it was before mentioned) he was received into the number of the Senators : attained unto the Quality of Illustrious, which was given to few men : and to compleat his dignity the Emperor made him *Prefect* of new *Rome*, where all offices were inferiour to his. In the mean time his book of *Anecdota* remained ; *Suidas* makes mention of it, and they who for divers considerations have been animated against the memory of *Justinian*, made use of it and alledged the matters in it to their prejudice : it was not long since printed in *Amsterdam* in *Expositions* and *Comments* (as bad as the *they explain*) others besides my self have already indeavoured to confute the absurdities of it ; but it shall suffice to show summarily, that all which *Procopius* has writ of History will prove ridiculous, if never so little credit be given to the Calumnies of this piece.

Thomas  
Rivius,  
and Ga-  
briel Tri-  
vorius.

He protests in the beginning of the First Book of the *Persian War*, that he cannot be reasonably reproached of writing any thing for favour, or to oblige the undeserving ; nor of refraining to speak the truth to spare a friend : and acknowledges in the same place, that as Eloquence is the object of Rhetorick, and Fable that of Poetry ; the knowledg of truth is the only end of History. After this declaration what can be said in his excuse, for having represented *Justinian*



in his History\*, as a mighty and most virtuous Prince, and in this Libel rendred him the most infamous and vicious of men? The fear of offending the Sovereign Powers which is thereupon alledged, cannot qualify such a shameful diversity, nor reconcile so manifest a contradiction. And *Procopius* is at the same time convinced of having trespassed, against the two most important Laws of History, whereof one forbids the writing of lies, and the other, concealing of a truth which ought to be discovered. But for a better understanding of this matter it may not be impertinent to proceed to some particulars.

It is certain that *Procopius* ever made very honourable mention of *Justinian*, and his Wife *Theodora* in his History, although he did it not so often as he might. In the Second Book of the War against the *Persians*, he extols the Emperor for providence joined with singular Piety, on the Subject of that great Pestilence which passed from *Egypt* to *Constantinople*, where he used all possible means to allay it. And in his *Six Narrations* of the *Edifices* of the same *Justinian*, he incessantly celebrates his greatness of Courage, his devotion, liberality, clemency, and magnificence. That Monastery of *Penitent Women*, whom the Empress *Theodora* withdrew from vice, gives him occasion to commend her zeal and charity jointly with her Husbands, although he recounts the action otherwise in his *Anecdota*. But he has remembered this Lady in many places of his History

*She was common Comedian before he married her.*



Lib. 1. de  
Bello Pers

story with great titles of honour. When a council was held to resist the enterprises of *Hipatinus* (who had caused himself to be proclaimed Emperor in *Constantinople*) he makes her argue so generously that, as he affirms, nothing infused so much courage into the whole imperial council, as her Heroical resolution. And when he describes the ill conditions of that *Johannes of Cappadocia* who was turned out of his office of *Praefect* of the *Pratorate*, he saies, he was so indiscreet and rash, as to slander the Empress *Theodora* even in the presence of *Justinian*, whom he there Stiles a very discreet Lady. And though he did not praise her in other places of his History, he never blamed her. In the end of the Second Book of the *Persian War*, he mentions her death, but does not speak ill of her. And in the Third treating of the War of the *Goths*, he again remembers her decease, which happened at the same time that *Belisarius* sent his Wife *Antonina* to Court, to forward his affairs there by the favour of the Empress, which he relates without using the least invective against her.

But let us now see the reverse of the Medal, and with how many different colours he draws the Picture of *Justinian* and *Theodora*, in that extravagant Satyr which we complain of.

Pag. 37.

To render this Prince the more odious, he will have him resemble *Domitian* in his outward form, whose memory was so much abhorred, that by a Decree of the Senate of *Rome*, his Statues



rues wear beat down through the whole Empire,  
 and his name razed out of the publick inscriptions.  
 But though he is constrained in the comparison  
 he makes of these Two Monarchs, to confess  
 that *Justinian* was not ill-favoured, yet he  
 likens him in one place to an Ass, not only for  
 his dulness and foolishness, but also in respect of  
 his wagging Ears, which made him be called in  
 a full *Theatre yaudage* that is to say *Master Ass*, Pag. 36.  
 by those of the *Prasine Faction* whereto he was an  
 Enemy; according to the observation of *Nicolaus Alemannus*,  
 who lately caused these *Anecdota* to be printed  
 with Historical Notes of the same kind. Moreover  
 he makes him a Prince, that condemned upon the  
 first, and very light information without hearing;  
 and would coldly and without any remorse, order  
 the razing of places, the sacking of Cities, and  
 the desolation of Provinces. The love of Women,  
 he saies, transported him beyond all bounds; and  
 he was an irreconcilable Enemy. He also accuses  
 him to make a show of being a Christian, but that  
 in his heart he esteemed the Heathen Deities.  
 His prodigality (he writes) especially in building,  
 forced him to use strange exactions, so that be-  
 sides the extraordinary Toils, he drew from the  
 Prefect of his Tribunal of Justice, a tribute, which  
 he himself called in a scoffing manner an *Airy  
 Lap*, because it had no other foundation than  
 his covetous and Tyrannical humour. His light  
 mind was susceptible of all impressions except  
 humanity

Pag. 39.  
 & 59

Pag. 91.



Pag. 60.

humanity He never kept his word, but when it was to his advantage: and was so transported with flattery, that nothing made him affect *Tribonianus* so much, as hearing of him once say, that he feared his extream piety would make Heaven steal him from the Earth on a sudden, and when it was least thought on. Lastly, it seemed, if this Character of him was true, that Nature had took pleasure to instil into the Soul of this Monarch, all the defects which are capable to defame the rest of Mankind. And the more easily to betray those they had a mind to ruin, his Empress and he laid this Snare, they feigned to be alwaies at discord, so that the one to compass their design, sided with those of the *blew Livery*, the other openly favoured the contrary party namely the *Green*, which were the Two factions of that time. They were both of them so impious saies this Detractor, that many persons to insinuate themselves into their esteem, seemed to be wicked and have all their inclinations bent to vice. And amongst those who knew them so well as *Procopius* they passed for no other than *Devils* Incarnate, and true *Furies* invested with humanity, more conveniently to infest human kind, incense Nations one against the other, and turn all the world upside down. It is certain, as he pretends, that the Mother of *Justinian* often confessed, that he was not begotten by her Husband *Sabbatius*, but an *Incubus* who lay with her. And as for *Theodora*, they who loved her while

Pag. 56.



while she was a *Comedian*, reported that *Demons* or *Nocturnal Spirits* often forced them from her, to take their places in her bed. That part of the book which for shame was cut off, from the One and Fortieth, and Two and Fortieth Pages of the printed *Anecdota*, was sent to me from *Rome*, wherein *Procopius* renders this Woman Author of actions so strangely incontinent, that I think no body has reason to envy the *Vatican Library* the *Original* entire, and that such abominations were never heard off. But let this that has been writ, suffice for a brief description of *Justinian* and *Theodora*, according to the lineaments wherein *Procopius* has represented them, in that infamous work which discredits all the rest we have of his. I shall not enlarge on what *Nicephorus Bartholus*, *Johannes Faber*, *Gennadius*, and several others have written of *Justinian*, who report that he was ranked amongst the *Saints*, assigning even the *Calends of August* for his holy day. But though he and his Empress had been the most vicious persons in the World, *Procopius* ought not to have been so unlike to himself, and so unfaithful to truth, as to speak of them so as he did, overthrowing the Faith of his History in his book of *Antidota*; and that of *Anecdota*, in his Treatise of the *Edifices of Justinian*, which is the last of his works. But without undertaking to refute so many calumnies, what appearance is there to accuse this Emperor of cruelty, after he had given the world a proof



of his clemency, by his gentle usage not only of the *Vandal* Kings, but of *Viniges*, and *Gilimer*, those very Subjects who had conspired against his person and government. *Johannes de Cappadocia* his prefect, and the valiant Captain *Artabanus* convicted of perfidiousness, escaped with imprisonment only, and the Last in a short time was restored to his offices, and the favour of that *Prince*, from whom he would have taken both life and Empire. I know that he is reproached for having been too severe to *Belisarius*. Yet we read nothing of it in *Procopius*, who in all likelihood would not have concealed it. *Agathias* writes plainly that those who envied this great Captain, were the cause that his services were not worthily rewarded, without speaking one word either of the condemnation, or confiscation of his goods. *Gregory of Tours* alledges, that *Justinian* was necessitated to substitute in his place the *Eunuch Narses* in Italy, because he was too often defeated there by the French, adding that to humble him, the Emperor reduced him to his first place of *Constable*, which could not be so considerable at *Constantinople*, as it was not long since in *France*. Some, but petty writers of no Authority, affirm that being reduced to extream misery, he was forced to beg; but that must be accounted as a Fable: and on the contrary we may observe in his person the bounty of his Prince, who having heaped riches and Honours on him, never treated him worse, although endeavours

Lib. 3.  
Hist. cap.  
32.



vours were thrice used to render him suspected of designing to be master of the State. It is also strange that he upbraids *Justinian* with his buildings, who writ a book purposely in their commendation, and who describing the lofty structure of so many Churches, Hospitals, and Monasteries, did no less admire the Piety, than the magnificence of their Founder. *Evagrius* attributes unto him the reparation or re-establishment of a Hundred and Fifty Cities; But I see no reason for this to be imputed to his disadvantage. Nor has the love of Women, for which his reputation is blemished, any better foundation. For though he may be blamed, for having engaged himself so far in the affection of *Theodora*, as to extort from his Predecessor *Justin*, new laws in favour of *Actresses*, that she might be qualified to marry him; we cannot therefore accuse him, like *Procopius*, for having abandoned his thoughts to Women, without specifying any particulars, when neither his own History, or any other mentions those Ladies to whom he was so passionately addicted; and who doubtless would have prevailed on his weakness, if he had been so fond on that side, as the *Anecdota* would make it be believed. I could not forbear to manifest in some sort, the absurdity of these Two or Three heads of accusation, by which one may judge of the rest, though they were not confuted either by themselves, or by what we had observed before we proposed them.



I must nevertheless, add this only word on the Subject of the *Stupidity* of *Justinian*, that though he had *wagging Ears* as the *Satyr* applies to him, he was never so blockish as he represents him.

*Anecd.*  
*Pag. 28.*

The truth is, a fault which was committed a Hundred and Fifty years ago, by one *Chalcondylus* that then printed *Suidas* by a corrupt Copy, where the name of *Justinian* passed for that of *Justin*, with the Surname of *ἀνὰ λῆξιν* an illiterate man, which even *Procopius* attributes only to the last, who could not so much as write his name; has made worthy men mistake: amongst which *Alciatus* and *Budæus*, when upon this false Authority, which all the *Vatican Manuscripts* contradict, they ranked *Justinian* with the most ignorant Princes that ever were. I was curious to see in the King of *France* his Library, Three other *Manuscripts* of *Suidas* which are there, to assure me of the mistake which happened in that impression: Two of the best account were very correct, and ascribe this ignorance to *Justin* alone (who was known to be a mean keeper of Oxen, before he bore Arms by which he attained to the Empire) but the Third was false, and in that *Justinian* was called *Justin*, which shews that the Impression before mentioned probably followed a Copy, as erroneous as the printed Book. In the mean time it is notorious, that *Justinian* had made a great progress in learning, under his Tutor the Abbot *Theophilus*.



*Ins.* Many Books are ascribed unto him by *Isidorus* and others. *Cassiodorus* his letters stile him most learned. And this observation has been also made, that many crowned Heads at the same time made profession of Philosophy, *Chosroes* in *Persia*, the unfortunate *Theodahatus* in *Italy*, and our *Justinian* at *Constantinople*; which plainly discovers the injury that is done him, by those terms of *stupid* and *ignorant*.

Though *Procopius* is to blame for having yeilded so much, to his particular resentments against *Justinian*, the reading of his History is of great moment, because we can learn from no other, what he delivers as an Eye-witness, of the Wars of this Emperor in *Persia*, of the *Vandals* in *Affrick*, and of the *Goths* in *Italy*. It was that which made *Leonard Aretin* commit the crime of a *Plagiary* (for we have no other term to signifie that sort of theft) when he had a mind to publish their History in Latin. For being not able to learn almost any thing of them elsewhere, he resolved to Translate the Three books of *Procopius* into the Roman Language; dividing them into Four by making Two of the last, and rescinding in some places; what he judged less important to his Country, and adding something in others; as the burning of the *Capitol* by *Totilas*, by whom as *Procopius* affirms, so much of *Rome* was not consumed by fire, as *Aretin* reports. In the mean time he is contented to say in his Preface, that he used some Forreign Commendaries,



taries, or Greek relations, not naming the person of whom he is meerly a bad translator, by an affected forgerfulness which cannot be too much condemned. We have already in our foregoing sections, exclaimed upon those who counterfeit Authors, ascribing books to persons that never thought upon making of them. And certainly it is a great point of infidelity thus to deceive as much as one can even all mankind: But as this vice is very great, I find that of a *Plagiary* which is the contrary, and takes away instead of giving, to be much the more shameful: because there is nothing more vile or infamous than to steal, and they who apply to themselves other mens labours, confess their own inability to produce something of value. But to return to *Procopius*, he was acquainted under *Belisarius*, with almost all the secrets of State of that Age, which renders his History of great weight. But the excessive zeal which he has for this *General*, makes *Bodin* amongst others, accuse him of too much partiality towards him. Thus *Eginard* is reprov'd for having alwaies flattered *Charlemagne*; *Eusebius*, *Constantine*; *Paulus Fovius*, *Cosmodi Medici*; *Sandonal* Charles the Fifth; and several others, the Princes whom they affected to oblige at the expence of truth. It is certain that *Procopius* never speaks, but to the advantage of *Belisarius*, he illustrates all his actions, and rather chuses to suppress a part of the successes which he recites, than to write any thing which might



might any waies blemish the reputation of his *Hero*. I shall produce one single instance, and such a one that I think is not to be matched in any other Historian, the place is in his Second Book of the War of the *Vandals*, where, after the Oration of *Belisarius* to his Souldiers, and Two others of his Adversary *Stozas*; *Procopius* writes that the Troops of the former revolting, forced their Chiefs to retire into a Temple where they were all killed. He was obliged in reason to signifie thereupon what became of *Belisarius*, who one would think was massacred with the rest. But because it was an unhappy event, without telling how he came off; *Procopius* adds only, that *Justinian* upon this ill news dispatched away his Nephew *Germanus*, who came and took possession of the command of the Armies in *Affrick*; and not saying the least word of *Belisarius*, he makes his narration so lame that the Reader knows not where he is. The Latin Text is a little defective here, having not all which is read in the Greek, yet this fault we speak of appears also in that version.

This puts me in mind of another place, in the Second Book also of the War of the *Goths*, where upon a meer Letter of *Belisarius* to *Theodebert* King of *France*, he quits the pursuit of his victories in *Italy*, and returns hastily into his Country. He acknowledged his fault, saies he, and his temerity, as soon as he had read the Letter of *Belisarius*, returning with all speed to *France*?



Lib. 3.  
Hist. cap.  
32.

*France*: as if this powerful Monarch came thither like a raw Schollar, without having well considered what he did; and the Rhetorick of *Belisarius* had obliged him and all his Council, to absent themselves for want of a reply. Certainly there is a great defect of judgment in this passage, and *Aretin* had reason to supply something of his own in this place, saying that hunger and want of victuals made the Victorious *French* return into their Countries. He might have added sickness, according to the relation of *Gregory of Tours* who speaks of this retreat. I find moreover, that our *Historian* makes *Theodebert* Author of an action, which does not agree with what he had said a little before of him, namely that the *French* were the men of the world, who violated their Faith the most; when the letter of *Belisarius*, which upbraids that Prince with nothing else but not observing Treaties, had nevertheless such power over him. An Author of more judgment would not have said so, nor have rashly offended a whole Nation, with the like Animosity wherewith the *Romans* declaim against the *Greek* and *Punick* Faith, at the same time when they themselves were the most unfaithful, that ever had been, to all Nations of the World. I must, before I leave that place where *Procopius* spoke so ill of the *French*, do the Nation reason, by remarking with how much malice and absurdity, he makes them in the same place, become Masters of the Camp of the *Goths*,  
and



and of that of the Grecians Romanized, as it were by a surprize, although they exceeded the number of a Hundred Thousand : as if their Army descended from Heaven upon the heart of *Italy*, like Grasshoppers, which a boysterous Tempest of wind transports sometimes, from one Region to another. But since we reprove him of having been too partial, let us stop here the course of the zeal, which we have for our *Ancestours*, that it may not be judged excessive.

Meaning  
the French.

To conclude, I think that *Procopius* deserves to be read attentively, especially in consideration of the things which he alone treats of with an exact knowledge. And that besides a great discretion is to be used in reading of him, to discern the good things from the bad, and the defects, whereof we have produced Examples, from what he has writ more judiciously. He was of *Casarea* in *Palastine*, from whence he came to *Constantinople*, in the time of the Emperour *Anastasin*, whose esteem he obtained, as well as that of *Justin* the First, and *Justinian* *Suidas* after he had given him the Surname of *Illustrious*, calls him *Rhetorician* and *Sophister*, as truly he seems to have been too much for an Historian. He is diffused, but with a Copiousness more *Asiatick* than *Athenian*, which has often in it more superfluity than true Ornament *Photius* only inserted in his *Library*, as was before mentioned,  
an



an abstract of the Two Books of the War against the *Persians*, although he made some mention of the rest. He distinguishes him elsewhere, from another *Procopius* surnamed *Gazeus* who lived in the same time of *Justinian*, and who also was a Rhetorician by Profession. If I durst follow the judgment of one, of the men of this Age, who has the greatest insight into the Greek Tongue; I should willingly be of his mind, that the Book of *Anecdota* is a supposed work, and falsely ascribed to the Historian *Procopius*. For that which is really his, is writ in a Stile much different from that of this Satyr, and has much more of the Air of Ancient Greece. But because even they who have writ against the *Anecdota*, seem to agree, that they are his to whom they are imputed, I was obliged to make the precedent Reflections, and to treat *Procopius* upon this Foundation, more to his disadvantage than I had otherwise done. It is true, that at the same time I end this Section, an Epistle of *Balthasar Boniface* to the *Clarissimo Molini*, which I read even now, hinders me from repenting of what I did. It is printed at the end of his judgment upon those who wrot the *Roman* History. And because they did not mention the *Anecdota* in the Chapter of *Procopius*, he takes occasion to declare his opinion to that *Noble Venetian* in the said Letter. He appears to be no less concerned than I, at such an insolent invective. And wonders,



Wonders, as I did, that *Rivius*, and they who undertook to answer it, never thought of considering it as a supposed piece, although he himself comes to no determination therein, being only content to declare how much he suspects it.

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REFLEC



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# AGATHIAS

**I** HAVE as much reason to doubt of the Religion of *Agathias*, as I had of that of *Procopius*. For when he speaks, in the beginning of his History, of the *French* of his time; he praises them amongst other things, for being all Christians, and because they entertained (as he adds) very good thoughts of God. But when he gives a reason in his Third Book, why the fortress of *Onogoris* situate in *Colchis*, was called in his time the *Fort of St Stephen*; he reports, that this *Protomartyr* was stoned to death in that *Place*, using the term *πασιν* as they say, or as it is said; from whence many draw a strong proof of his infidelity. The most common opinion also, founded as well on this passage, as on some others, lists him in the number of the *Gentils*; although he never railed any more than

*Proco-*



*Procopius*, against Christianity; as most Pagan Historians did in imitation of *Zosimus*. The time wherein these Two lived, not favouring Paganism, is perhaps the only cause. He himself declares in his *Preface*, that *Marina* a City of *Asia*, was the place of his Nativity; which he distinguishes from another of *Thrace*, bearing the same name. His Father was called *Memnonius*; and he professed the Law, pleading at the *Judicatories of Smyrna* in Quality of an Advocate, as *Suidas* reports; whence he had the Surname of *Scholasticus*: because the places where the *Roman Laws* were taught, then went under the name of Schools, as they are even at this time in some places called. He confesses that Poetry was the Mistress of his first affections, which led him to write many small Poems in Heroick Verse, that he published under the Title of *Daphnicks*. And there are certain of his Epigrams collected by divers hands, whereof, I believe, many are seen in the *Greek Anthology* under his name. And this renders his Stile so agreeable and Florid, having undertook History, by the advice of *Eutychianus* the First Secretary of State, as approaching in this respect to, and bordering (as he terms it) upon Poetry. *Sigonius* and *Verderius* were of another mind concerning his writing, and that very different from this opinion, listing him amongst the lowest and impurest writers. But they were not only mistaken in *Agathias* his Stile; but have been accused for several



veral other rash judgments ; so that I have been constrained many times hitherto, to follow some more equitable censures than theirs. He began not to write till after the death of *Justinian*, in the Reign of *Justin the Second*, as he himself declares in his *Preface*, beginning his History where *Procopius* left. And I doubt not, but that great Statesman *Eutychianus*, who put him upon so high an Enterprize, and who was his intimate friend, furnished him with many rare pieces and Memorials of consequence, to make him so successful as he has been. There are *Letters* and *Direct Orations* in all his Books ; as that of *Narses* in the Two First ; of *Aetes* in the Third ; of the *Deputies* of *Colchos* in the Fourth ; of *Belisarius* in the Fifth. And not content to penetrate into the Councils, and to discover the principal causes of events, he frequently gives his judgment thereupon : and contrary to the custom of *Xenophon* and *Cesar*, who never declare what they think of things, he delivers his opinion of matters ; and therein imitates some great Authors, who were not of the mind of these we mention

Although *Agathias* highly commends *Procopius* ; he does not refrain from following opinions very contrary to his, and even reproves him sometimes, for having given unreasonable conjectures : of which there are many examples ; the most considerable whereof, is that which he said to the advantage of the *French*, in his First Book,  
 against



against the infamous reproach which *Procopius* had cast upon them, of being the most unfaithful of men. *Agathias* on the contrary, after he had shown that they were very polite and civil, as they who already made use of the Roman Laws almost in all things, adds, that they were to be esteeme<sup>d</sup> for nothing so much, as the exact justice they observed without exception, their Kings themselves being not exempted from it; whereby they lived in an admirable Union. Certainly, besides that justice is a transcendent virtue, and which comprehending all others, cannot subsist without fidelity; nothing is more contrary to it, than breach of word or Faith, and consequently *Agathias* could not more reasonably contradict *Procopius*, nor make better amends for the wrong he had done the *French Nation*.

It is observable, that notwithstanding these Two Historians had such opposite thoughts in what concerned us, they agreed in what related to the greatness and independence of our Kings. *Procopius* acknowledges, in the Third Book of the *Gothish War*, that They, and the Roman Emperors, were the only Monarchs in the World, who had the privilege to stamp their Images on golden Coin; so that even the King of *Persia*, who had such glorious Titles, durst not attempt to do the like. *Agathias* also speaking of King *Theodebert*, saies, that he was so much offended to see, that the Emperor *Justinian* assumed among other titles, that of *Francicus*; as if he had conquered



conquered the *French*, and held some right of superiority over them; that for this consideration alone he resolved to go and subdue *Thrace*, lay Siege to *Constantinople*, and overthrow the Roman Empire, hereof that City was then the *Capital*. I know that the same *Agathias* calls that design rash, presupposing that *Theodebert* would have perished in so bold, or, to use his term, in so furious an Enterprize. Nevertheless he confesses, that this King had brought it to such a pass; that if he had not been killed, as he was hunting a wild Bull, nothing had retarded him in it: and God knows, whither the event would have answered the conjectures of Our *Historian*. But we may say that these are unreprouchable testimonies, of the absolute power of the French Monarchy, which never acknowledged any Superiour but God (and according to the words of a good *Gaule* to *Alexander*) any thing but Heaven to be above it.

To return to the reflections of *Agathias*, very different from those of *Procopius*, which seem to have the force or argument wholly on their side, we will examine a very remarkable place of his Fourth Book. Where he cannot endure that *Procopius*, not content to say that *Arcadius* left his Son *Theodosius*, and Empire, to the protection of *Isaigerdes* King of *Persia* (which no Author worthy of credit ever writ before him) should more over praise the action, as if it were full of prudence: and add, that although *Arcadius* was not  
very



very discreet in other things, yet in this he shewed wisdom, and demeaned himself very prudently. This, saies *Agathias*, is judging of things by their success, as the vulgar alwaies do; but weighing them with reason, it will be found, that a Sovereign never did any thing more blameworthy, than this Declaration of *Arcadius*: for he seemed in it to make a Wolfe Gardian of a Sheep, trusting his Son and State in the hands of their greatest Enemy; through a confidence which though it is sometimes tolerable in private men, was not sufferable when the safety of a young Monarch lay at stake, and the preservation of a Crown by so much the more envied, as it pretended to give Laws to all others. Methinks, every one ought to yeild to this opinion of *Agathias*, and conclude with him, that in the event of this Tuition, happy as it appeared, there is more reason to admire the goodness and integrity of the King of *Persia*, than the wisdom of the Emperor *Arcadius*.

Amongst many very remarkable things found in the Five Books of the History of *Agathias*, particular notice is to be taken, not only of what he saies of the following Oriental Monarchies, towards the end of the Second; but chiefly of what he adds in the Fourth, concerning the succession of the Kings of *Persia*, since *Artaxares* who restored the Empire to them, from whose hands the *Parthians* had taken it, and placed it in their own. For besides his care and industry



to handle this matter well, the authority of one *Sergius* an *Interpreter* is of great weight, who had from the *Annalists* and Library-keepers of the *Persian* Kings, all that this *Historian* delivers unto us. Wherefore doubtless, he had reason to correct the writings of *Procopius*, by the Records wherewith this *Interpreter* had furnished him, and to prefer them before all other relations; because they that describe the History of their own Country, are rather to be believed than strangers, especially if their discourse be grounded on such Authentick Pieces, as were those of the *Publick Archives*, which were communicated unto *Sergius*. Thus we have finished all we purposed, on the first part of our Enterprize, and shall proceed to the second, which is to consider the writings of the most considerable of the Latin Historians, which remain of the Ancients.

*Places  
where Ancient  
Records  
were kept.*

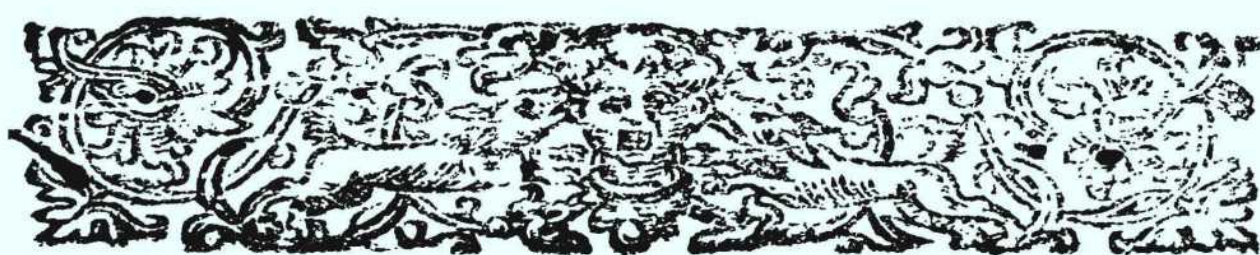


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THE  
SECOND PART  
BEING  
REFLECTIONS  
upon the Writings  
OF THE LATIN  
HISTORIANS.

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REFLECTIONS  
UPON THE  
*HISTORY*  
OF  
CRISPUS SALUSTIUS.



THE same reason which induced me to give *Herodotus*, the first place amongst the *Greek Historians*, obliges me to allow the same rank, amongst the *Latin*, to *Crispus Salustius*, although there have been some much more Ancient than he. For it is known that *Ennius* had writ Eighteen *Annals* in Heroick Verse long before him: and that *Nevius* in the same Age described the *first Punic War*, in another sort of Verse called *Saturnian*. *Fabius Pictor* was the first of the Romans (as *Vossius* observes) that compiled a History in Latin



*Crispus Salustius.*

Prose. *Posthumius A binus*, *Cassius Hemina*, and *C Fannius*, whom *Salust* celebrates for true Historians, writ after him. And *Cato* with his *Origines Historicae*, *Sempronius*, *Valerius Antias* and *Quadrigarius* ( so often quoted by *Aulus Gellius* ) may be all said to have preceded *Salust* in this sort of writing. But since there remains to us nothing of their works, but the grief for the loss of them ( the Histories of *Fabius*, *Cato*, and *Sempronius* delivered unto us by *Annins of Viterbum*, being all counterfeit, by an imposture which we have already complained of more than once ) is it not just to begin this our Second Enterprize with *Salust*, from whom we have Entire pieces of History, and other Fragments which all learned men respect? I know that *Julius Caesar* is as Ancient as he, and that some even affirm, that *Salust* though Elder, died Seven years after the murder of this *Emperor*. It cannot be a fault to give precedence in this place, now he is dead, to One that he could never indure while he lived. The name of *Commentaries* rather than *History* which his works bear, invites me to it; And the language of *Salust* ( that is taxed with the Air of Antiquity, and affectation of the old words of *Cato* ) may be another Motive, in which also the judgment of *Martial* ( which all the world pledges in his favour ) very plainly concurs :

*Mart. in  
Apoph*

*Hic erit, ut perhibent doctorum corda virorum,  
Crispus Romana primus in Historia*

Besides



Besides the reproach made him by *Asinius Pollio*, for having too much affected that old way of writing, which *Cato* used in his *Origines*, the ~~same~~ contrary vice is imputed to him (*Viz.*) of making too many new words; *Audacious Translations*, as *Suetonius* calls them; and Phrases purely Greek; Whereof *Quintilian* gives this Example, *Vulgus amat fieri*. Moreover he is accused of having been too concise in his expressions, thereby rendering his *Stile* obscure and difficult, as shortness ordinarily confines upon obscurity. Wherefore the same *Quintilian* instructs young men to read *Livy* more than *Salust*; and charges them to avoid carefully, that broken and contracted way of writing, of which *Salust* made a perfection; and which is truly very agreeable in him: but we ought not to propole it to our selves for imitation, because it may render us insensibly less intelligible, which is very contrary to true Eloquence. We learn also from divers passages of *Aulus Gellius*, that many persons in his time, found fault with the Education of *Salust*; though it appears sufficiently, that he himself was not displeased with it: for he calls him in one place, *Subtilissimum brevitatis Artificem*, and in another, *Proprietatum in verbis retinentissimum*, *Seneca* likewise, whose *Stile* fitted to his Philosophical profession, is wonderful short and interrupted, does not forbear to rail at the affectation of one *Aruntius*, who in his History of the *Punick Wars*, took great pains to express it

*A. Gell. l. 1. c. 15.*

*L. 9. inst. cap. 3.*

*L. 2. inst. c. 5. & l. 4. 6. 2.*

*L. 3. c. 1. l. 4. c. 15. et l. 10. c. 20.*

*L. 11. ep. 114.*



it in the very terms of *Salust*. He censures his too frequent repetition of the word *hyemare*, and of *Famas* in the plural signifying *Fame*, and some other expressions which were read in *Aruntus*. But nevertheless he writes, that in the time of *Salust*, obscure brevity, and cut periods, which left men to guess at the sense, passed for an Ornament of language; *Salustio vigente, amputata sententia, & verba ante expectatum cadentia, & obscura brevitās, fuere pro cultu*. But do we not see that *Macrobius* many Ages after, under the Authority of one of *Ensebius* his *Entertainments*, makes *Salust* reign in the concise way of writing; that is, he rendered himself so considerable in it, that no body thereupon could dispute the first rank with him.

Because the word *brevity* is *equivocal*, and many persons speak of *Tacitus*, and *Salust*, as of Authors equally brief; it may be convenient to declare, of what great consequence it is, not to confound their *Stile* as agreeing, when they are very different. It cannot be denied that *Tacitus* followed *Salust* in close way of writing, which both used; wherein they may be said somewhat to resemble one another. And in this all those agree that have considered the *Stile* of the Ancients; and even *Tacitus* himself acknowledges, how much he esteemed that of *Salust*, when he called him *Rerum Romanarum florentissimum Auctorem*, which made him imitate him. But it cannot be affirmed that this *Laconick* expression, which

L. 5. *Satur.*  
S. 1.

L. 3. *hist.*



which is common to them both, makes them equal in the rest, and can make them pass for as correct Historians one as the other: for to speak properly, a succinct way of writing does not so much contribute to make an exact brief Historian; as when the matter whereof he writes is such, that nothing can be taken from it, without a prejudice to his Subject, and the spoiling of his work. *Tacitus* is admitted to be an Author correct, and brief in his Phrase, by the impossibility there is to cut of the least word of his composition, without necessarily diminishing his thoughts, and doing a notable injury to his narration. But it is not so with *Salust*, who though he straightens his Stile, puts many things into his History, which are not essential to it, and may be severed from it without distracting his design, or wronging the conduct of it, according to the observation of *Julius Scaliger*.

*Lib. 4. de  
re Poet.  
Cap. 24.*

We have but parcels of the principal History of *Salust*, the beginning whereof was at the foundation of *Rome*: but Two intire pieces of his remain, *Catilines conspiracy*, and the *War against Jugurtha*; from whence may be drawn sufficient proofs of what I have said of him. As for the first, though small, it has Two Prefaces, whereof that which precedes, and is a most excellent Declamation against idleness, may nevertheless be called a true *Saddle for all Horses*; because, as *Quintilian* well observed, it has nothing which relates to his History, nor any thing which  
renders



renders it more proper for this than any other composition. It is followed by a *description* of the good and bad conditions of *Cataline* in Three or Four periods. And from thence he passes to the Second *Preface*, finding himself obliged, as he saies, by the immorality of *Cataline*, to describe the virtues of the first Romans, and that which made them degenerate in his time. To this end he begins no nearer, than at the foundation of *Rome* by the *Trojans*, when the Fugitive *Aeneas* with the rest, came to dispute, that part of *Italy* where it is founded, with the *Aborigines*. He afterwards shews how it was governed by Kings, who were deposed for their pride, and how it became great in a short time, by the virtue of the Inhabitants. He insits upon the Wars they waged with the *Carthaginians*; the slackning of Discipline which happened since; and the civil Dissentions of *Marius* and *Sylla*, which had like to have made the Republick desolate. All this he relates to come at length to *Catilines* time, the most corrupted of all; and which seemed to invite that bad Citizen to enterprise his conspiracy. Wherefore methinks, it cannot be properly said, that he who takes occasion to write, though very well, so many things, before he enters upon his chief purpose, affects brevity. The *Preface* of the *Jugurthine War* is no nearer to its Subject. It is an *Investive* against those, whom Vice and Riot diverted from imbracing those occupations of the mind, herewith Nature had sufficiently endowed.



dowed them. He pretends not to be of that number ; and therefore judging it in no wise convenient, considering the corruption of the Age, to interest himself in the Government of the State, he declares he will endeavour to be useful to it, by the employment he undertakes of writing History ; and will begin with that of the Wars which the Romans had against *Jugurtha*. But we cannot better show, with what liberty he enlarges upon all he thought, might render his work more agreeable, than by the *Digression* of those Two Brothers named the *Philani*, who died so gloriously, for the love of their Country : and that upon the pretext alone of Two *Deputies* of the little *City* of *Leptes*, situate between the Two *Syrtes*, who came to *Metellus* after the taking of *Thala* ; where he takes occasion to say, that he thinks fit to relate a Notable action, which happened in the same Country, of Two *Young Men of Carthage*, who buried themselves alive to increase the Territory of their Nation. And thereupon he makes a curious description of the State differences, and Wars, which the *Cyrenians* heretofore had with the *Carthaginians* concerning their limits, and how they agreed upon a course, wherein the Two *Philani*, after an extreme diligence, were contented for the good of their Country, to take so generous a resolution. It is certain that the *War of Jugurtha* might have been described as well without this *Digression* ; and if *Salust* had affected to be concise in his History,



Lib. 10.  
inst. c. 1.

History, he would doubtless have forborne it. Which induces me to affirm, that though his Expression or Phrase was very short, as was that of *Tacitus*, it does not restrain him from being large like *Livy*, in the body of his History, who uses not such confined expressions. And perhaps *Servilius Nonianus* had no other meaning, when he spoke these words mentioned by *Quintilian*, *Viz.* that *Salust* and *Livy* were rather *equal* than *alike*, *pares eos magis esse quam similes*, because both of them handled their Subjects very diffusedly though in different manner.

I shall be very sorry if it be thought, that by marking this Digression of *Salust*, I seek to condemn it. It seems to me very agreeable; and I am of the opinion, that no sort of *Episodes* are to be blamed, unless when they are unreasonably used: nor would I be understood to arraign him for what I have related concerning his Phrase and expression, either as too new, or too old, desiring not to be of the number of those that censure a whole work, for a word which displeases them. It is good to avoid as much as one can, that form of speech which is out of use, or which is not enough used: and perhaps *Salust* in the time he writ, was justly reprov'd upon that account, considering the authority of his Accusers. But we ought not to be too scrupulous in that point, and I desire those that are so nice, that they cannot suffer any thing in language, that grates them never so little, to consider what *Dien Chrysostomus*,



*Stomina*, one of the most celebrated Oratours of Greece, observes, when he describes the incomparable Eloquence of *Homer*. He saies that he freely used all Dialects, and as a Painter mixes his Colours, he agreeably mingled the *Dorick*, *Attick*, and *Ionick Dialects*. He made no difficulty to imploy a significant term, were it never so Ancient, and not commonly approved of; and therefore *Dion* compares him to those who have found a Treasure, and sell old pieces of Gold and Silver, whose worth is esteemed because of their intrinsick valew, though they are not current coin. And where he found energy and grace, though in new and barbarous words, he composed them saies he, freely in his verses; as often as there was occasion to expresse, the murmur of running Waters, the noise of Winds, or some such resemblance. In the mean time (adds this Great Oratour) whatever liberty *Homer* took, he is acknowledged to be the most eloquent of all Poets, and the Prince of those of his Profession. And we ought to give the like judgment of the Eloquence of History, or Oratory, as *Dion* does of that of *Homer*; but because I have insisted upon it largely enough in another Treatise, I shall say no more of it here.

*Orat. 22.*

To return to *Salust*, it is no wonder that he was discommended for his Stile, since *Thucydides*, whom he had proposed to himself for a Rule and Prototype, was not free from censure. Yet this did not hinder *Zenobius* a Greek Sophister, who

*Vell. Patere. in voce Zenobius.*



L. 9. cont.  
decl. 1.

who lived in the time of *Adrian* the Emperour, from taking the pains to translate the History of *Salust* into Greek, so great a reputation it bore amongst those of his Nation, as well as the Romans, as *Suidas* reports. But the judgment of *Seneca* in behalf of our *Historian*, is very considerable, who writes in one of his *Declamations*, that *Salust* only equalled by *Quintilian*, to *Thucydides*, surpassed him in his concise way of writing, and as he terms it, *conquered him even in his own fortification*, in the place where he seemed to have the greatest advantage, *cum sit precipua in Thucydide virtus brevitatis, hac eum Salustius vicit, & in suis eum castris cecidit*. His reason is, because one may take away something from a sentence of *Thucydides*, impairing a little the Ornament of it, but not utterly spoiling it; whereas to do the like to the expressions of *Salust*, they will be very perceptibly defaced. And *Seneca* complains thereupon of the injustice of *Livy* who endeavoured on the contrary to advance *Thucydides* above *Salust*. It was not said he, for the great affection he bore *Thucydides* that he prefers him, but because he is not jealous of him, and therefore he does it to get more easily the applause from *Salust*, whom he had ranked below the other.

In Hadr.

The Emperour *Adrian* was of another fancy, when he preferred one *Cecilius* to *Salust*, *Cato* to *Cicero*, and *Ennius* to *Virgil*. But *Spartianus*, who took notice of the capricious judgment of this Prince,



*Prince*, shows us that of Another as advantageous to our *Historian*, as this was prejudicial. He writes ~~that~~ *Septimius Severus* at the point of death, feeling himself subdued by sickness, sent to his Eldest Son that *Divine Oration* (so he terms it) which *Salust* makes *Micipsa* at his death speak to his *Children*, to exhort them to concord: This Oration is in the beginning of the *Jugurthine War*; and by the credit it received from that *Emperour*, it makes its Author be valued above that contempt of him, which *Adrian* exposed, and none ever imitated. in Sev

There is an *Oration* that *Cicero* ascribed to *Salust*, which is a counterfeit, and ought not to be admitted as his, for it is not an Historical work; and all the learned agree, that how Ancient soever it may be, and notwithstanding that it is quoted by *Quintilian*, yet *Salust* never was the true Author of it. But there is not a like consent amongst the Criticks, in what relates to the *Two Orations*, or rather *Epistles* addressed to *Cæsar*, probably about the time when he made War in *Spain*, and which treat of the order that might be established in the Government of the Republick. *Lewis Carrion* cannot be perswaded that they are of *Salust*, especially considering that none of the Ancients, who often quoted passages of his writings, ever recited any part of these Two *Epistles*. *John Douza* on the contrary part affirms, that their Stile, and the Faith of all Manuscripts ought to oblige us to hold they proceed. Lib. 4. in 1.  
cap. 1.



proceeded from *Salust* his own hand. It is true that none can deny that they are very Ancient, and were writ in the time of the purity of the Latin Language.

It is of much more importance to observe, that from *Salust* may be drawn a certain Testimony, that all judgments of the manners of men by their writings, are not receivable. No one ever spoke better sentences than he, in favour of all sort of Virtues, and chiefly of Chastity ; nor used more rigid invectives against the excess and avarice of his time. But notwithstanding this, it is recorded, that his immorality made him be expelled the *Senate* by the *Censors* : and that being taken in Adultery with *Fausta* the Daughter of *Lucius Scilla*, by *Milo*, he had been sentenced to be shamefully whipped, if he had not by money commuted for the offence ; which we learn from *Aulus Gellius*, under the Authority of *Varro*, *Pedannus Servinus* and others. He is moreover accused to be immoderate in his desire of riches, joined with great profusion, which is not only objected to him by the *Satyr* of *Lenæus* an illustrious Grammarian, and Freeman of *Pompey*, but the *Oration*, which they make *Cicero* speak against him, mentions that he had consumed his Patrimony, and even in his Fathers time, their House was depressed because of his debts. It is true that *Cæsar* restored him to his dignity of *Senator* and procured him the *Prætorship* ; and having sent him into *Numidia*, furnished him with oc-

Lib. 17.  
Noct. Att.  
cap. 18.

Suet. de  
Ill. Gram.  
cap. 18.

Apud Dio-  
nem lib.  
42 & 43.

casion



caſion to recover his former State and Riches ; which laſt he purſued with ſo much Tyranny , that(though after he had ranſacked the whole Province, and found a way to be abſolved by *Cæſar*, he could not eſcape the infamy of his actions, which was ſo much the greater in him, becauſe it was conſidered how ſeverely he had in his Hiſtory , expoſed thoſe who were much leſs guilty than he, and *Metellus* amongſt others , whoſe exceſs and expences in *Spain* he very much arraigned ) He returned ſo rich from *Africa* , that he immediatly purchaſed one of the nobleſt dwellings in *Rome*, in the *Mount Quirinal*, with Spacious Gardens , which are at this day called the *Gardens of Saluſt* ; and beſides this he had a Country houſe at *Tivoli*, which *Cicero* tells him of in the ſame Oration. His life therefore was very different from his writings ; and his Example alone is ſufficient to prove, that as very good men may write very bad Books, ſo vicious men ſometimes may compoſe thoſe that are good ; it being not incongruous that an Author ſhould at the ſame time be an excellent Hiſtorian, and a wicked man.

Amongſt the things obſerved in him, and which are moſt conducing to the recommendation of his Hiſtory, is his imbarcking purpoſely to take a precise view of the places in *Africk* , of which he intended to make a deſcription ; becauſe it was requiſite ſo to do, for the better underſtanding of what he writ. And this was the practice of the beſt Hiſtorians ; and *Meffenio's* words in *Plautus*, ſhow  
N ſuffici-



## Crispus Salustius.

sufficiently, how important and necessary to an Historian, the Romans thought Voyages, and the sight of places. That *Servant* saies to one of the *Manechm?*, that they had travelled over the world enough, and that it is time to return home, unless they have a History to write.

— *Quin nos hinc domum,  
Redimus, nisi si historiam scripturi sumus.*

So perswaded they were at Rome, where this was said, that to be a good Historian, it was expedient to have travelled aforehand, which I think I have already observed in the Section of *Polybius*. It is moreover affirmed, that *Salust* made provision of many books writ in the Punick Tongue, which he caused to be very carefully interpreted to him, to make use of them likewise in his Historical Treatise. But though few are ignorant how much the Ancients esteemed this Author, as it is before expressed, I shall nevertheless produce the Authority of *Lipsius*, though a Modern Author, to join in his commendation, who made no scruple to call him the *Prince of Historians*. He frankly prefers him to *Cesar*, *Livy*, and the rest of those he likes *minorum gentium historicos*; and praises *Cornelius Tacitus* for nothing so much, as having excellently imitated *Salust*. *Turnebus* also averred, that he found so much Eloquence in his writings, that in his opinion he approached nearer to *Demosthenes* than *Cicero*. I have purposely passed in silence, what *Trogus Pompeius* objected against the Orations of *Livy* and *Tacitus*, which he made  
Direct,

*Manech-*  
*mi a Co-*  
*medy so*  
*called in*  
*Plautus*  
*because of*  
*Two of*  
*that name*  
*so called*  
*in it.*

*Pref. in*  
*Tac. &*  
*not. in l. 1*  
*Pol.*

*L. 28. ad-*  
*vers. c. 22.*  
*Justinis*  
*l. 38.*



Direct, instead of being Oblique ; because though he, and some others are of that opinion, yet it is subject to much debate. *Salust* inserts *Letters* in his writings, without regarding what that of *Lentulus* to *Cataline*, or that other of *Mithridates* to *Arsaces*, does interrupt the contexture of his Narrations. But though these are little things, yet they deserve to be taken notice of in great Authors, for an example. If *Keckerman*, and some modern Writers, had been touched with such a reasonable consideration, they would not have condemned, as they did, all sort of blame or praise given by an Historian. The reason they give for their opinion is weak, saying that such things are more the business of an Oratour ; and according to them, a naked Narration leads a Judicious Reader enough, to esteem or disapprove the actions represented : for they observe not, that an Oratour and an Historian have many things in common, which makes *Cicero* say some where, that History is the most important part of Oratory, *opus oratorium maxime*. And on the other side the authority of *Salust*, joined with that of *Thucydides*, *Livy*, *Agathias*, and several others ( whose writings we read with so much satisfaction, who were either contrary to the persons they speak of, or to the things they report ) ought to render them more reserved in their censures.

*Lib. i.  
de leg*



( 180 )

REFLECTIONS  
UPON THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
JULIUS CÆSAR

L. 10. inf.  
c. 1. codem  
animo  
dixisse quo  
bellavit.

THE name of *Julius Cæsar* is so illustrious, that nothing can be added to the commendation of his works, of what nature soever they be, after it is said that he is the Author of them. So that he is not indebted to his military actions alone, for the high reputation that follows him; since his learning has contributed little less to it than his Arms; and he is not less glorious by the Crown he received from the *Muses* upon their *Parnassus*, than his Triumphs by *Bellona's* side in the Fields of *Mars*. Which made *Quintilian* say, that *Cæsar* spoke and fought by the same Spirit, and that the same happy *Genius* which favoured all his victories, animated even his Orations and writings. It is observable, that amongst the praises which the Ancients gave to the Orators of that time; though.



though they valued much the sharpness of *Sulpitius*, the gravity of *Brutus*, the diligence of *Pollio*, the judgment of *Calvus*, and the copiousness of *Cicero*, they admired above all the vigour of *Caesar's* Style, *vim Caesaris*: as if the same virtue by which he executed so many military exploits, had inspired him with that Ardour and vehemence, by which he was alwaies so eminently distinguished from the rest of that Age. But if it may be fit to enlarge on this subject, and draw new parallels of the learning and valour of this incomparable Prince; it will not be difficult to shew, that *Europe*, *Asia*, and *Africa*, even all the parts of the world then known, divided his Conquests: nor has he less penetrated into the intellectual Globe, having hardly left any Science uncultivated, and not improved to admiration. In his most tender age he composed the *Praise of Hercules*, and wrote the *Tragedy of Oedipus*, and some other Poems under the Title *Julii*, which *Augustus* afterwards did forbid to be published. We cannot affirm, what the Poem called *Iter* was, which *Sætonius* mentions. But as for that Epigram which some ascribe to him, and others to *Germanicus*, made upon the young *Thracian* which fell into the River *Hebrus*, as he played upon the Ice; it is one of the most delicate pieces of all Latin Poetry. Great was his fame in Oratory, as it is before expressed: and his Orations for the *Bithynians* for the *Law Plautia*, for *Decius à Samnite*, for *Sextilius*,

*Ascon.  
Pedia.*

*In. Cæs.  
cap. 36.*



and many others ( which are now wanting ) gave a certain Testimony of his excellency therein. At the age of One and Twenty, he solemnly accused *Dolabella*: and being no more then *Quæstor* he composed the funeral Orations of his Aunc *Julia*, and his Wife *Cornelia*; and his two *Anticatones* shewed what he could do in *Satyr*; as his Two other books of *Analogy* gave him no small place amongst the most esteemed *Grammarians*. He wrot some Treatises of presaging by the flight of Birds; and others of *Augury*; and some of *Apothegms* or short and witty sentences. But what he publisht of the motion of the Stars, which he had learned in *Ægypt*, deserves so much the more to be considered, because it Prognosticated his own death on the *Ides* of *March* ( if the Elder *Pliny* may be credited ) nor must we omit the mention of his reformation of the *Calendar*, which succeeded that work. I pass over the *Ephimerides* or *Journals* mentioned by *Servius*, which he left, to proceed to his *Commentaries*, which are his Historical writings that we now propose to examine, and the only work remaining of so many different pieces, whereof methinks a perfect *Encyclopædie* might be made.

The Title of these *Commentaries* alone makes it manifest that *Cæsar* had no design to write a compleat History. They are so naked, saies *Cicero*, and stript of all those ornaments of Oration, which he was very capable to give them; that though they are extreemly agreeable in the condition

Macr. i.  
Satur. cap.  
14. in. l.  
11. An.

In Bruco.



dition they are, they are to be taken for nothing else but Notes prepared by him, for their use who would compile a History of his time. And though materials so well provided might have excited some persons rash enough to attempt any thing, to try their skill to refine and polish them; yet all judicious men have abstained from doing it, and others that perhaps endeavoured in it, have found themselves altogether unable, and unlikely to gain to themselves any Honour, by meddling with a design framed by so great an Artificer. His pure and elegant Stile is ordinarily compared to that of *Xenophon*. And though he is brief, nothing that is obscure can be imputed to him; for the places wherein he seems any thing difficult are without doubt corrupted. Since we know that he was so far from falling into the vice of obscurity, that he himself gives it as an important precept, to avoid like a Rock all expressions that are not frequently used, and thereby less proper to explain a thing neatly and clearly. As for the matters whereof he treats in his Commentaries, they are his own actions which he describes, and he recounts few events that he has not seen. Nevertheless *Suetonius* makes *Asinius Pollio* accuse him of not having been exact enough, and even to have swerved sometimes from truth, either through credulity when he relied on false reports, or wittingly for defect of memory; so that as the said *Asinius* conjectures, if he had lived, he would have reviewed his

Commen-

*A Gell. l. i.*  
*Noël. Att.*  
*c. 10. &*  
*Macr. l. i.*  
*Satur. c. 5.*

*In cæs.*  
56.



Commentaries, and corrected them in several places. To say the truth, his report is very different in many things that concern himself, from what we read of him in other Authors, such as *Dion*, and *Plutarch* who have writ on the same subject. An Example of this (to instance no more) may be observed, in what he writes concerning that publick Treasure, which was preserved from the time that *Rome* was taken by the *Gaules*, not to be made use of but in some extrem necessity. He pretends that *Lentulus* who had order to send it to *Pompey*, abandoned it by his flight, upon the first Rumour that *Caesar's* Troops began to be masters of *Rome*, though it was a false report. But that which is received for a certain truth in this matter, is, that *Metellus* intending as *Tribune*, to hinder *Caesar* from seizing on the Treasure, was forced to quit the City, being terrified by the Menaces of *Caesar*, who made the Gates of the place where that sinew of War and of the State was kept to be forced open, which proved a wonderful advantage to his designs. This shews that it is oftentimes no less difficult to an Historian, than any other writer, to resist the temptations of humanity, and treat as indifferently of the things which concern himself, as those wherein he is no way interested. For my part I doubt not, but *Caesar* said many things of the Ancient *Gaules*, which would be contradicted by their Histories, if any of them had been preserved to our time.

Some



Some Criticks have maintained, that neither the Three Books of the *Civil War*, nor the Seven of the *War of the Gaules*, were writ by Cæsar. but such an opinion is so groundless that it merits not the least reflection. As for the Eighth book of the last mentioned work, most agree that *Hirtius* was the Author of it, who writ also the *Commentaries* of the *Wars* of *Alexandria*, *Africa*, and *Spain*. Though some ascribe them to *Oppius* an intimate friend of *Cæsars*, who likewise wrote a Treatise, to prove that the Son of *Cleopatra*, which she pretended to have had by the same *Cæsar*, was not of his begetting. Whosoever was the Author of the last book of the *War of the Gaules*, appeared to have been much in the favour and confidence of *Cæsar*, for he saies in one place, that though all that read the writings of *Cæsar* admire them as well as he, yet he had more reason to do it than others, because they consider in them only the purity of Phrase, and excellency of Stile; but he who knew with what facility and expedition he used his Pen, had a more particular subject of admiration. This passage calls to my memory the noble Elegy which *Pliny* gave him (*viz.*) to have surpassed in vigor of mind all the rest of Mankind. He writ that he has been seen at the same time to read, write, dictate, and hear what was said to him; and adds that he made nothing at once to dictate to Four Secretaries; and when he was not diverted by other affairs, he usually imploied Seven

to

*Fr. Flori-*  
*duſ Sabi-*  
*nus, et*  
*Lud. Car-*  
*rio.*

*L. 7. Nat.*  
*hiſt. c. 25.*



## Julius Cæsar.

to write under him. This activity of thought is as if he were something more than human, and indeed the greatness of his genius would be judged wholly incomparable, should we examine it exactly in the extent of all his actions: But this being not the proper place for such an inquiry, we shall confine our self to what particularly concerns his Commentaries.

They are destitute of many Rhetorical Ornaments, as we have already observed, yet they contain both Oblique and Direct Orations: and they have been so valued by all Nations, that they are translated into most languages. *Selimus* the Great caused them to be turned into *Arabick*. And it is held that the reading of them, which was no less agreeable than ordinary with him, contributed much to the conquest of so many Provinces, wherewith he augmented his Empire. And *Henry the Fourth* that famous Monarch of *France*, took the pains to translate into *French* those that related to the War of the *Gaules*: which doubtless were no small assistance to that heroick Ardour, wherewith his whole life was animated. It was under *Florence Christian* his Tutor, that he undertook that work so worthy of himself. And *Cassaubon* who affirms that he saw it writ by the *Kings* own hand, adds, that he told him he was recollecting his matter, to write Commentaries of his own actions, which he would finish as soon as his leisure would permit. But God was not pleased to allow him that leisure, and his hasty death,  
by



by a crime more detestable than was that of the Murtherers of *Cæsar*, has deprived us of those *Second Commentaries*, which might have made a greater resemblance between these Two Princes, than there is ; though the clemency, valour, diligence, and several other virtues wherein they both excelled, rendered them very conformable to each other, not to mention the resemblance of their ends.

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REFLEC.



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# TITUS LIVIUS.

**S**OME persons have given the same Elogy to *Livy*, as *Seneca* the Rhetorician ascribed to *Cicero* ( viz. ) to have had a wit answerable to the greatness of the Roman Empire. And others have not been content to equal the eloquence of this Historian to that of so great an Oratour, but have proceeded so far, as to suppose that if *Cicero* had attempted to write a History, he would have been inferiour to him in the performance of it. But without reflecting on either to their disadvantage by such comparisons, we may say that they both excelled in their way of study ; and as never any one was heard with so much attention and transport at *Rome* as *Cicero*, so we have no example of a reputation higher and more glorious in respect of History than that of *Livy*. *Pliny* the Younger has left us a memorable passage



passage of his fame in one of his *Epistles*. Where he saies that his Predecessors saw a man come into *Italy* from the extremities of *Spain* (which was then counted the remotest place of the Earth in the West) to have the satisfaction to see *Livy*, and injoy for some time his conversation, who sought no other diversion than the discourse he had with so great a person; and though the Capital City of the world where he found him had many rarities to entertain his curiosity, nothing thereof could detain him, after he had conversed some time with him for whose sake he undertook such a journey. But we must observe that the credit *Livy* has amongst the learned, is not only for the writing of this History, for he had writ certain *Philosophical Dialogues* before he came to *Rome*, which he dedicated to *Augustus Caesar* and which acquired him the love and protection of that renowned Monarch, the most favourable to the *Muses* that ever governed the Roman Empire. And besides these *Dialogues* which are mentioned by *Seneca*, we learn from *Quintilian*, that in a *Letter* to his Son he delivered excellent Precepts of *Rhetorick*, wherein he especially commended to his reading the writings of *Demostheres*, and *Cicero*, bidding him neglect many other Authors, unless any were found amongst them, to resemble those which he advised him to have alwaies in his view. And one may read in *Suetonius*, that *Livy* was chosen amongst the most learned men of his Age, to take care of the instruction

*Ep. 101.*

*Lib. 10.*

*inst. cap. 1.*

*In Claud.*

*cap. 41.*



## Titus Livius.

*Suetonius*  
*in Claud.*  
*loco cita-*  
*te.*  
  
*Quint. l.*  
*10. inst.*  
*c. 1.*  
  
*Ep. ad. Jo.*  
*Boc. l. 7. de*  
*hon. disc.*  
*c. 12.*
 instruction of *Claudius* who afterwards was Em-  
 peror ; and in his younger years by the advice  
 of this his *Tutor*, as *Suetonius* reports, he under-  
 took to write the Roman History, of which he  
 gave many volumes to the Publick which are lost  
 to us. As to the writings of *Livy* the last and  
 most considerable thereof, is the History which  
 reached from the foundation of *Rome* to the death  
 of *Drusus* in *Germany* ; the fine contexture  
 whereof, the agreeable narrations, and the plea-  
 sing easiness makes him to be compared to *Hero-*  
*dotus*, and placed in the first rank of the Latin  
 Historians. It was not at first divided by *De-*  
*cales*, as we now see it. That is a recent distribu-  
 tion or distinction, whereof no mention appears  
 in *Florus* his Abbreviator, nor in any of the An-  
 cients ; and which *Politian*, *Petrarch*, with *Petrus*  
*Crinitus* have already disputed. Of the Hundred  
 and Forty, or Hundred and Two and Forty Books  
 which it contained, there remain not above Five  
 and Thirty, nor are they all in an uninterupt-  
 ed continuation, for the whole Second *Decade* is  
 wanting, and we have but the First, the Third,  
 and the Fourth, with half of the Fifth which was  
 found at *Wormes* by one *Simon Gryneus*. The be-  
 ginning of the Forty Third book has been also  
 lately recovered, by the means of a Manuscript  
 in the Library of the Chapter of *Bamberg* ; but  
 this fragment is a little contested. *Franciscus Bar-*  
*tholinus* that brought it from *Germany* into *Italy*,  
*Antonius Queregnus*, and *Gaspar Lusignan* the  
Author



Author of the first impression, judge it Authentick. But *Vossius* and some others on the contrary, pretend that it is a counterfeit piece, and can be only imposed on those who have ears like *Midas*. For the remaining Fourteen *Decades* we must rest satisfied, with that *Summary* or *Epitomy* which *Florus* compiled, if he was the Author of a work which many persons condemn, believing him to have been the cause of the loss of *Livys* writings, a loss that cannot be enough lamented. This is the opinion of *Bodin* who likewise accuses *Justin*, for having done the same prejudice to *Trogus Pompeius*, *Xiphilinus*, and *Dion*, in epitomizing them. *Casaubon* is also of this mind, who thinks that the brief collection made by *Constantine*, of a body of History in Fifty Three parts, occasioned the neglect of the Authors that composed it, which were afterwards lost. But if the Three *Decades* and a half which we have of *Livy*, make us deplore the want of the rest, they are yet sufficient to represent him to our esteem; most worthy of the Elogies which he received from the Ancients. The most celebrated whereof was that yielded to him, two hundred years ago by *Alphonso* King of *Arragon*, when he sent his Embassador to demand of the Citizens of *Padua*, and obtained from them as a pretious relique, the bone of that Arm wherewith this their famous Country-man had writ his History, causing it to be conveyed to *Naples* with all sorts of honour, as the most estimable present

*L. 9. c. 19.  
de. hist. lat.*

*In Meth.  
hist. c. 2.*

*Anno  
1451.*



sent could be made him. And it is said that he recovered his health from a languishing indisposition, by the delight he had in reading the same History.

But it is strange to consider with how much passion others went about to defame if they could, a person of such rare merit. In the Age wherein he lived *Asinius Pollio* arraigned his Style, which he called *Patavinity*. *Augustus* taxed him of having favoured *Pompey's* party, but did not therefore diminish his good will towards him. And *Caligula* a while after, accused him of negligence on the one side, and too excessive redundancy of words on the other, taking away his image and writings from all Libraries, where he knew they were curiously preserved. But the capricious and Tyrannick humour of this Prince, was exercised in the same manner towards the works and Statues of *Virgil*. And he would have suppressed the Verses of *Homer*, pretending that his power ought to be no less than *Plato's* who had prohibited the reading them in his *Imaginary Republick*. Moreover hating *Seneca*, and all men of eminent Virtue, it came into his head to abolish the knowledg of Laws, with all those Lawyers whose learned decisions were respected. But the humorous conceit of such a Monster cannot prejudice *Livy*, nor those others we named, no more than that of *Domitian* a second prodigy of Nature, who put to death, through a like animosity, *Metius Pompeianus*, because amongst others he delighted

Suet. in  
Calig. cap.  
34. et in  
Domit. c.  
10.



to expose some Orations of Kings and Generals, collected by him out of *Livy's* History. The Testimony of *Augustus* is full of moderation, he declares that the same History instead of flattering the victorious Party, could not condemn that of the good and most honest men in the Commonwealth, who had all listed themselves on *Pompey's* side, which rather tends to the commendation of *Livy* than otherwise. But that which *Pollio* finds fault with in all his observations, is a thing which deserves to be a little more reflected on.

The most common opinion is, that this Roman Lord accustomed to the delicacy of the language spoke in the Court of *Augustus*, could not bear with certain *Provincial Idioms*, which *Livy* as a *Paduan* used in divers places of his history. *Pignorius* is of another mind, and believes that this odious *Patavinity* had respect only to the Orthography of certain words, wherein *Livy* used one letter for another, according to the custome of his Country, writing *sibe*, and *quase*, for *sibi*, and *quasi*; which he proves by divers Ancient inscriptions. Some think that it consisted meerly in a repetition, or rather multiplicity of many Synonymous words in one period, contrary to what was practised at *Rome*, where they did not affect such a redundancy which denoted a Forreigner. Others report that the *Paduans* having alwaies been of *Pompey's* Party, which was apparently the justest as we have observed, *Pollio* that



that was a *Cæsarian*, derided *Livy's Patavinity*, and accused him of having shown too great an inclination for the unhappy faction of the vanquished; which seems so much the likelier, by the conformity it has with that opinion of *Augustus*, which we already mentioned. There are those who likewise affirm, that *Livy's* partiality for those of *Padua*, appeared manifestly in those books which are lost, where he was led by his Subject to an immoderate praise of his Country men. It is the same fault which *Polybius* imputed to *Philinus* as a *Carthaginian*; and *Fabius* as a *Roman*. And many modern Historians have been charged therewith, whereof *Gnucchiardin* was one, who to oblige the *Florentines* dwells so long upon the least concerns of their State, and amplifies so much their smallest actions, that he often becomes troublesome, and sometimes ridiculous in many mens judgment. The quaint *Distich* of *Aelius Syncerus*, against that of *Poggins* on the like occasion, renders it altogether despicable,

*Dum patriam laudat, damnat dum Poggins hostem;  
Nec malus est civis, nec bonus historicus.*

They who rather imagine than prove a like passion in *Livy*, please themselves with a belief, that this was that which *Pollio* found fault with in his History, when he was offended that it had too much *Patavinity*. I rather build upon that sense which *Quintilian* gives the word, who in all probability knew in his time the true signification of it. He quotes it in the Chapter of the virtues  
and



and vices of Oration, where he remarks, that *Vellius* was reproached of having imployed too many *Sabine*, *Tuscan*, and *Prænestine* words in his writings, so that, saies he, *Aucilius* thereupon laughed at his language, as *Pollio* did at the *Patavinity* of *Livy*. Wherefore after an interpretation so exprefs, of such a considerable Author in this respect as *Quintilian*, I should be loath to wrest the signification of that word, which the Courtiers of *Rome* reproved in the History we speak of, to any other sense than that of Stile and Phrase.

*Justin* informs us, that *Trogus Pompeius* censured *Livy's* Orations for being Direct, and too long; which many attribute to some jealousy, that might arise between Two Authors of the same time and profession, *Quintilian* observed that *Livy* begins his History with an *Hexameter Verse*: and *Mascardi* in the Fifth Treatise of his *Art of History*, rehearses many others which he found there; but there is no prose where some do not occur, if looked after with too much curiosity. The same *Mascardi* taxes him in another place, of having been defective in many important circumstances, which we read in *Appian*, and which he ought not to have omitted. I have already shown in a precedent Section, how *Seneca* the Rhetorician accuses *Livy*, of having suffered himself to be swayed by envy, when he gave *Thucydides* the preference to *Salust*. I here add in opposition to *Vossius* his opinion, that  
O although

Lib. 9. in lib.  
cap. 4. part  
Cap. 6

Tr. 1. c. 4.

L. 9. cont.  
decl. 1.



Lib. i. de  
Ira. c. ult.

Lib. de  
tranq. c. 9.

Vide Vos-  
sum de  
Hist. Lat.  
pag. 95.  
cap. 19.

although *Seneca* the *Philosopher* conferred the Title of most Eloquent upon *Livy*, he does likewise reprove him in the same place, for having attributed to any man greatness of wit without goodness, believing them to be inseparable Qualities. And in another place on the subject of the *Great Library of Alexandria*, he blames him for commending the care of those Kings who founded it; and yet pretending, that they did it rather in a vain ostentation of glory, than a true affection for books. But such *Stoical* Austerities do not much wound the reputation of an Historian, who speaks according to the common sense of things, and is not obliged to follow all the opinions of Philosophers. But if *Arconinus* his *Itinerary*, such as *Annius* of *Viterbum* exposed was true, it would be a hard matter to excuse *Livy* of a great fault which he accuses him of, in speaking of *Fannus Volturna*, which was his suppressing of the most gallant actions of the *Tuscans*, whereof he envied them the glory. But it is of importance to know, that the impudent supposition of *Annius* in this respect, appears manifestly in the good editions of that *Itinerary*, which we have from *Simler*, and *Surita*, wherein nothing like that is read, because it is a slanderous addition of the *Impostor*, who foisted in this corrupt relation with that Comment, whereof we have so often complained already. But I find it a harder task to answer the zeal of *Gregory the Great*, who would not suffer *Livy's* Works in any Christian Library



Library, because of his Pagan Superstition, which I remember I read in the *Preface* of *Casaubon* upon *Polybius*. And indeed it cannot be denied that his History is filled with many Prodigies, which denote a great adherence to Idolatry. Sometimes an Ox spoke; one while a Mule ingendered; another time Men, Women, and Cocks, and Hens changed their Sex. There are often showers of Flint-stones, Flesh, Chalk, Blood, and Milk. and the Statues of the Gods be mentioned to speak, shed tears, and swear pure blood. How many Ghosts are made to appear; Armies ready to engage in Heaven; with Lakes and Rivers of Blood; and the like? So that no Historian ever reported so much of the vulgar's vain belief of that time, as he. But we should condemn almost all the books of the *Gentils*, if our Religion received any prejudice from such trifles. One might moreover represent to *Pope Gregory*, that *Livy* exposes all those and some others of the same nature, no otherwise than as fond opinions of the vulgar, and uncertain rumours which he derides; often protesting, that although he is obliged to report them; because they made such an important impression upon the minds of most men of that time, and had a mighty influence on the greatest affairs, yet there was nothing therein but vanity and imposture.

*Dec. 1. l. 5.  
et dec. 3.  
lib. 1. et 4.*

Some modern Authors have been found, such as *Bodin*, *Benius*, and others like them, who presumed to censure *Livy's* Style for being too Poetical

*Lib. 2. de  
consec. hist.  
Jul. Scal.  
l. 1. quæst.  
c. 2.*



tical in some places, too prolix in others, and often unlike it self. But these are rash judgments, and worthier of pity than consideration, chiefly in respect to those that give them. Yet the like cannot be said of *Budæus*, and *Henricus Glareanus*, that accuse him of injustice to the *Gaules* in all his narrations, where he treats of them and their Wars. I know they who have endeavoured to defend him from this imputation, reply in his behalf, that if the powerful consideration of *Augustus* his Protector, could not hinder him from speaking honourably, not only of *Pompey*, but even of *Cassius*, and *Brutus*, as *Cremutius Cordus* testifies in *Lacitus*, it is improbable that he should refrain from saying the truth in what concerned the *Gaules*, out of a particular Animosity, to render himself more acceptable to the Romans. But it is certain, he was borne away herein with the common tide of opinion, and that there was no Latin Historian of that time, who did not as well as he use all Nations ill, to oblige the *Italian*, either through flattery or ignorance, taking their relations from the reports of the victorious, who suppressed all the memorials of others.

Lib 4.  
annal.

Priori  
nomine  
Patavium  
appellata.  
\* Vicus ad  
Euganeos  
colles in  
Italia  
Pa-  
tavium.

So general a fault nevertheless, ought not to hinder us from esteeming *Livy* in particular, as one of the first men of his Country. He was of † *Padua*, and not of \* *Aponus*, as *Sigonius* imagined, because of a verse in *Martial* which puts one place for another, by a figure ordinary enough



to Poets. His residence at *Rome*, and the favour of *Augustus*, afforded him the means to have all the instructions necessary for the compiling of his History. He composed one part of it in that capital of the Empire, and the other at *Naples* thither he retired from time to time to digest his matter with less disturbance. After that Emperors death he returned to the place of his Birth, where he was received with unparalell'd honours, and applauses by the *Paduans*, and there he dyed in the Fourth year of the Reign of *Tiberius*, and the very day of the *Calends* of *January*, which was also *Ovids* last day, according to the observation of *Eusebius* in his *Chronicles*. His life was lately delivered unto us by *Jacobus Philippus Thomassinus* the *Paduan Bishop*, who omitted nothing that a *Paduan* could say, to the advantage of One whom he considers as the glory of his Country. He mingled in all places of his History Oblique and Direct Orations, wherein his Eloquence principally appears. And he did not refrain from Digressions, though he excuses himself for it, in the Ninth Book of his first Decade, on the Subject of *Alexander*, whose renown, he saies, obliged him to reflect upon the probable success he might have had against the *Romans*, if he had attacked them. He makes a question of equalling Ten or Twelve Roman Captains to that invincible Monarch, but manages it with so much disadvantage on one side, and so much flattery on the other, that it is the place in his whole History, which



which is the least agreeable to a judicious Reader Is it not ridiculous to say upon so serious a Subject, that the *Senate* of *Rome* was composed of as many Kings, as there were Senators? And ought he not to have considered, that *Alexander* led Twenty Generals under his command, *Ptolemaus*, *Lysimachus*, *Cassander*, *Leonatus*, *Philotas*, *Antigonus*, *Eumenes*, *Parmenio*, *Cleander*, *Polyperchon*, *Perdiccas*, *Clitus*, *Ephestion*, and others like them, more renowned and experienced in military affairs, if we may judge by their actions, than all those Roman Chiefs which he pretends to compare to him? To say the truth, that his Digression examined in all its parts, is more worthy of a declamer, than of an Historian of *Livy's* reputation.

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REFLEC-



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# VELLEIUS PATERCULUS.

**T**HOUGH *Velleius Paterculus* in the Two Books he composed, pretended only to write an Epitomy of the Roman History, from the Foundation of *Rome* to the time wherein he lived, which as he himself reports, was in the Reign of the Emperour *Tiberius*. Yet he began his Treatise with things more Ancient, for though the beginning of his first Book is lost, we nevertheless find, in the remains of it, the Antiquities of many Cities more Ancient than *Rome*, the Originals whereof he discovers, before he describes the Foundation of that great *Metropolis*. He was of an illustrious extraction as appears by those of his family, who had signalised themselves in the exercise of many of the greatest employments of the Roman Empire. And he himself having gloriously succeeded in the military

*Vide Vossium de scriptoribus latinis. l. 1.*



tary profession, saies that the remembrance of the countries he had seen, during the time he commanded in the Armies, and in his voyages through the Provinces of *Thrace*, *Macedonia*, *Achaia*, *Asia* the less, and other more Easterly Regions, especially those upon both the shores of the *Euxin* Sea, furnished his mind with most agreeable diversions. Whereby one may judge that if he had writ this History as intire and large, as he sometimes promised, we should have found many things very considerable in it, as reported by a man who was so Eminent an Eyewitness, and had a share in the execution of the noblest part of them. In that little which is left, wherein he represents all compendiously, divers particulars are related that are no where else to be found; which happens either by the silence of other Historians in those matters, or the ordinary loss of part of their labours.

The Stile of *Velleius Paterculus* is very worthy of his Age, which was also the time of pure language. His greatest excellence lies in discommending or praising those he speaks of; which he does in the softest terms and most delicate expressions, that are seen in any other Historian or Oratour. But he is blamed and perhaps with reason, for flattering too much the Party and House of *Augustus*, and making extravagant Elogies not only of *Tiberius*, but even of his Favourite *Sejanus*; whose merit he celebrates as of one of the prime and most virtuous persons, which  
the



the Roman Common-wealth has produced. But the like fault may be observed in many others that have writ the History of their own times, with a design to publish it whilst they lived. However it was, *Lipsius* imagined that those his excessive praises of *Sejanus*, were the cause of his fall, and the ruine of the rest of that unhappy Favourites friends, who were almost all put to death upon his account; but yet this opinion can pass for nothing but a meer conjecture, since it is no where else to be seen. The nature of his Epitomy did not (it seems) admit of Orations. Yet an Oblique one is seen in his Second Book, which he introduces the Son of *Tigranes* to speak before *Pompey*, to procure his favour. I find besides a very remarkable thing in his Style, to wit, that amongst all the Figures of Oratory which he uses, he imploies the *Epi-phonema* so gracefully, that perhaps no One ever equalled him in that respect. So that in all or most of the events which he mentions, there are few that he does not conclude with one of these sententious reflections, which Rhetoricians call by that name. And besides the beauty of that figure when it is judiciously employed, as he knew how to do it, there is nothing instructs a reader more usefully, than that sort of Corollary applied to the end of the chief actions of every narration. He shewed his great inclination to Eloquence, in his invective against *Mark Anthony*, on the Subject of his proscription, and the death  
of



of *Cicero*, whom none ever raised higher than he does in that place, and in another of the same book, where he acknowledges that without such a person, *Greece* though overcome in Arms, might have boasted to have been victorious in wit. And this he did in pursuance of that zeal, which made him declare in his first book, that excepting those whom this Oratour saw, or by whom he was seen and heard, there was none amongst the Romans who ought to be admired for their Eloquence, which was a faculty as to the excelling part, as it were inclosed only in the space of *Cicero's* life.

*Civitatem  
non muro,  
sed vallo  
fossaque  
&c. quam  
appella-  
bant Cice-  
ra, è no-  
mine deæ  
Cisæ, quam  
reigiosissi-  
mè cole-  
bant.  
Wolfgangus  
Lazius.  
Lib. 1. de  
frag. Vel-  
leii*

Besides the Two Books of the abridged History of *Velleius Paterculus*, a Fragment has been seen which is ascribed to him, touching the defeat of some Roman Legions in the Country of the *Grisons*. And of that part amongst others where this small writing places a City called *Cicera*, it informs us, that of a Legion there engaged, *Verres* alone escaped, whom the above mentioned *Cicero* caused afterwards to be condemned with infamy, for having during his Proconsulship in *Sicily*, used such extortions in so important a Province, that they had like to have made it desolate. But most learned men, & *Velferus* with *Vossius* amongst the rest, declaim against this piece, which they affirm to be counterfeit as well by the Stile, which seems of an Age much inferiour to that of *Paterculus*, as by the matter whereof it treats, wherein they find great absurdities. But laying aside



aside the doubtful judgment of Criticks, it is evident in respect of the true Phrase of this Author, that excepting the faults which proceed rather from his transcribers than himself, and the Copies than the Original, we have nothing more pure in all the Latin Language than his Writings; nor more worthy of the times of *Augustus* and *Tiberius*.

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REFLECT



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# QUINTUS CURTIUS

## RUFUS.

*lib. 3. ad  
Q. fr. ep.*

**A**LEXANDER has no reason to complain ( as once he did ) for not having like *Achilles*, a *Homer* to celebrate his prailes, seeing there was found amongst the Latins, so eminent an Historian as *Quintus Curtius* to describe the actions of his life. I take him to be one of the greatest Authors they had ; and the excellency of his Stile would oblige me to think him more Ancient than *Livy*, and *Paterculus*, and to make him pass for him of whom *Cicero* speaks in one of his *Epistles*, if the more common opinion of those who have laboured in the search of his Age, did not yeild him *Vespasian's* Contemporary ; and some to have lived in the Reign of *Trajan*. I will not insist upon the passages



passages of his fourth book where he speaks of *Tyre*, nor on that of the Tenth where he makes a Digression upon the felicity of his Age, because many are subject to wrest those expressions to their own sense. But as he lived to a great Age, he may well be the same person that *Suetonius* mentioned, as a great Rhetorician in the time of *Tiberius*; and *Tacitus* as a *Prator* and Proconsul of *Africa* under that Emperour, for there is not above Two and Thirty years from the last year of *Tiberius* to the first of *Vespasian*. And what the *Younger Pliny* reports of a *Phantasm* which appeared in *Africa* to one *Curtius Rufus*, can be understood of no other than him that was mentioned by *Tacitus* as aforesaid.

*Lib. ix.  
Ann.*

*Lib. 7. ep.  
27. ad Su-  
ram.*

But it is of little moment to my design, to reconcile the diversity of opinions on this subject, which are collected together in *Vossius*, and *Raderus* a Commentator of *Quintus Curtius*. He is perhaps a Son only of those whom *Cicero* or *Suetonius* mentions, and may have nothing in common with any of the other that we named, especially considering that neither *Quintilian*, nor any of the Ancients, have said the least word of him or his History, which is very strange: for how *Quintilian*, who omitted not to mention all the considerable Historians then extant, in the Tenth Book of his *Institutions*, writ in *Domitians* Reign, could forget him, is not to be answered, without presupposing that the works of *Quintus Curtius* were not at that time published.

The



The ordinary impressions of this Author witness, that his Two First Books, and the end of the Fifth are lost as also the beginning of the Sixth and in some few places of the last which is the Tenth, there manifestly appears a defect. It was not *Quintianus Stoa*, but *Christopher Bruno* that supplied the Two first Books, which he did out of what *Arrianus*, *Diodorus*, *Justin*, and some others left us in writing of the Achievements of *Alexander* the Great. *Quintus Curtius* did well to abstain from the relations of the counterfeit *Callisthenes* (the true one cited by *Plutarch* being not to be found) which make One *Nectanebus* a *Magician* to be the Father of that Monarch, instead of *Philip* of *Macedon*, and represent him rather as a *Roland*, or *Amadis* of *Gaule* than a true Conqueror. *Henry Glarean* is not followed by any, in his distribution of *Quintus Curtius* his History into Twelve Books, re-establishing the Two first, and dividing the rest into Ten others, instead of the ordinary Eight. But in what manner soever his History is disposed, it will be alwaies found worthy of its Subject; and to him alone can that Elogy be applyed, which one *Amyntianus* insolently and undeservedly arrogated to himself (*Viz*) that he had in some sort equalled by his Stile the noble actions of *Alexander*. As Censurers are every where found, it is not to be supposed that *Curtius* will escape them. The same *Glarean* whom I mentioned before, reproves him for having like an ill Geographer, made  
the



the *River Ganges* proceed from the South ; and confounded *Mount Taurus* with *Caucasus*, and also mistook the *Faxaries* of *Pliny* for the *River Tanais*. But one may answer in his behalf that these errors ( if they are such ) are not his, who as a Latin Author did no more than follow the Grecian Relators, from whom he borrowed his History. *Strabo* observed in the Fifteenth Book of his *Geography*, that the *Macedonians* called that, *Caucasus*, which was but part of the *Mount Taurus* ; because the former furnished them with more fabulous matter than the latter , as that wherewith they delighted to flatter the ambition of *Alexander*, and their own also. And as for the course of the *Ganges*, although it is true that generally speaking it descends from the North to the South, yet *Strabo* adds that it finds such opposition as obliges it many times to hold different courses, and that at length it conveighs all its waters to the East. But *Mascardi* makes other objections, he thinks him excessive in the use of Sentences ; and though he cannot but confess that all his are very elegant and ingenious, yet he accuses him for not having alwaies imployed them judiciously, making some persons speak in a Phrase no way proportionable to their conditions ; and he instances in that Oration of the *Scythians* to *Alexander* in the seventh Book. I have read it over and over by reason of this imputation, but with far different Fies from those of *Mascardi* ; and I can scarce believe that it is a

*Tr. 5. dell.  
arte hist.  
c. 2. ep. 3.*



piece contrived by the Author, for I find all matter and Stile, so itly suited to the persons of the *Scythian* Ambassadors that pronounced it, both in respect of the Sentences, and all the rest of its parts, that it passes in my judgment for a Copy taken from the true Original of *Ptolemaeus*, *Aristobulus*, *Callisthenes*, *Onesicritus*, or some other of those present with *Alexander* at the time it was spoke, who had the curiosity to insert it in the History of that Monarch. I insist not on that part which is so well accommodated to the present made by those *Barbarians*, of a pair of Oxen, a Plough, a Cup, and an Arrow. The Greek Proverb of the solitary places of their Country is admirably applyed. And the *Scythian* description of Fortune without feet, whose flight cannot be stopped, although you have hold of her hands, seems unexpressibly graceful in their mouths. But though all these things do suit wonderfully well with the persons that utter them, I find the greatest harmony in the manner of imploying those Sentences which *Mascardi* arraigns; and if ever the *Decorum* of the *Latins* was considered, or those rules observed which their Rhetoricians authorised, I think one may say that *Quintus Curtius* has on this occasion most religiously kept them.

They who know with what liberty the *Scythians* and *Tartarians* use Fables in all their discourses, and that they, like the rest of the Eastern People, scarce say any thing without intermixing



ing parables therewith, will admire the judgment of *Curtius* in the most sententious part of that Oration, which his Censurer found so much fault with. Are you ignorant (say those Ambassadors to *Alexander*) that the tallest Trees which are so long growing, may be beat down and rooted up in an instant? It is not the part of a wise man to mind only the fruit they bear, and not to consider their height, and their danger of falling. Take heed lest endeavouring to climb up to the top, their uttermost branches do not break, and make you fall with them. The Lion be it never so great and fierce, sometimes serves for nourishment to the least Birds; and Iron for all its hardness is often consumed with rust. Nor is there any thing so solid or strong in Nature, that may not be hurt by the weakest things, and which have in appearance the least vigour. Certainly here are many Elegant expressions, which instead of being condemned for unseemliness, as spoken by *Scythians*, ought rather to be esteemed in a more than ordinary manner, for the Air they have of their Country, and that unusual way of expression, which almost totally differs from that of the Greeks or Latins. If I had a mind to censure this History, as well as Others, I would not find fault with its Geography, or Rhetorick; I should rather accuse *Quintus Curtius* for his Immorality, wherein he can be no way justified. For after he had acknowledged in more than one place, that *Alexander* made the same use of the

*Lib. 6.*

*Lib. 10.*



## Quintus Curtius Rufus.

*Eunuch Bagoas*, as *Ti'arius* did, which made him have so great a power over his affections (not to speak of *Ephestion*, whose friendship he does not render so shameful or criminal as others have done) he had the confidence afterwards to affirm, that the pleasures of *Alexander* were natural and lawful. The place I mean, is where he first represents the death of that Prince, and then examines his virtues and vices, using these very terms, *veneris juxta naturale desiderium usus, nec ulla nisi ex permissio voluptas*. How! this infamous passion he had for *Bagoas* was not then esteemed against Nature? I know not, since long before, notwithstanding the darkness of *Paganism*, *Phocylides* had observed in one of his verses, that even Brutes naturally abhorred that sort of conjunction. And *Plato* how infamous soever in that respect, acknowledged in the Eighth Book of his *Laws*, that even before the time of *Laius*, that Example of Beasts, made masculine love be stiled a sin against Nature. Certainly *Quintus Curtius* his fault herein cannot be palliated, what licence soever may be ascribed to the *Gentils*, both *Greeks* and *Romans*, on this Subject.

I will not repeat in this place what I said in the Section of *Arrian*, of some small errors of *Quintus Curtius*, which are amended by the writings of the former, or rather by the mutual assistance which these Two Authors give one to the other to be rendered more intelligible. But I will observe, that notwithstanding the praise<sup>n all</sup>  
we<sup>iss.</sup>



we attributed to the *Græci*, of having been one of the most tender writers in matter of prodigies, he whom we now examine is much more reserved therein than he, of which there needs no more proof, than what they both writ of one or two extraordinary Springs, which newly sprung up from the ground where *Alexander* had encamped, near the *River Oxus*. *Arrian* saies that one of them was of Oil, and the other of clear Water, which he confidently reports, as if he would impose a belief thereof on his Readers.

*Quintus Curtius* on the other hand, saies nothing of the Source of Oil, but that in digging of Wells a Spring was found in the Kings Tent, of which as soon as it was discovered, a rumour ran as if it had been miraculous; and *Alexander* himself so far improved it, as to be pleased that it should be thought a grace of Heaven, bestowed on him by the Gods. But to shew clearly, with what circumspection this Historian alwaies handled things which admitted of doubt, I will instance the terms wherewith he accompanies the narration he writes of a Dog in the Kingdom of *Sopita*, that fastened on a Lyon with so much courage, that he suffered his members to be cut piece-meal; rather then lose the hold he had taken. *Equidem*, saies he, *plura transcribo, quam credo. Nam nec affirmare sustineo de quibus dubito, nec subducere quæ accipi.* And this moderation may be applied to that place of the same book, where on the occasion of *Ptolemy's* sickness, a Serpent stewed to *Alexander*

Lib. 7

Lib. 9.  
But this  
fierceness  
so admired  
and doubt-  
ed by *Cur-*  
*tius*, is not  
strange to  
us, that see  
the like  
courage in  
our *Al-*  
*ists* on all  
occasions.



in his sleep, an Herb which would cure him. Truly when an Author is so modest in his relation, that he appears not to have any design to invade the credulity of his Readers, he may write what he pleases, as we have already remonstrated in the Chapter of *Livy*.

Amongst all the Latin Historians there is none more generally approved than *Quintus Curtius*. Some are for *Livy's* Stile, others for that of *Tacitus*, but all agree that *Curtius* has writ very agreeably, and well. *Lipsius* advises that no book is more worthy the perusal of Princes, than this History which he commends to their frequent inspection. Some there are of that dignity, who have not only recreated their minds with this Book, but found other advantages by it. We have already reported somewhat like this in what we writ of *Livy*; and I remember I observed that one *Laurentius de Medicis*, who caused the History of the Emperors to be read to him, was so affected with the recital of some notable Act of *Conrard* the Third of that name, that he thought he owed his health to the content he received from that relation. *Antonius Panormitanus*, and several others observe a memorable occurrence concerning our Author, in reference to *Alphonso* that wise King of *Arragon*, who finding himself oppressed with an indisposition, from which all the remedies of his Physicians could not deliver him, sought some diversion in the History of *Quintus Curtius*; which was with so much satisfaction and good success, that

*Lib. de  
reb. gest.  
Alph.*



that he became cured of his infirmity, and protested to all about him, that neither *Hippocrates*, nor *Avicenna*, should ever be of equal consideration to him with that Treatise. But to draw to a conclusion, I must admit that *Curtius* is excellent in all his Orations, either Direct or Oblique. I have seen but one *Letter* in all his works, which is the answer of *Alexander* to *Darius*. And I do not remember that there is any other Digression, than that one of the Tenth Book which I mentioned before, where, taking an occasion from the Divisions amongst the *Macedonians* after the death of him that had made them Monarchs of the world, he celebrates the felicity of the Roman People, reunited in the time when he wrote, under a great and happy Emperor. We must not take for a Digression, the Relation of the manner of living of the *Indians*, and the Description of their Country, which is found in the Eighth Book, because there is nothing therein, that is not essential to the Theme which the Author proposed to himself; for being to write of the Exploits of *Alexander* in that Country, it was requisite for him to give some summary account of it.

*Supposed  
to be Ve-  
spasian.*

REFLEC-



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# CORNELIUS TACITUS.

I suppose  
the Au-  
thor is mi-  
staken in  
this con-  
putation,  
for Vossi-  
us speaks  
but of two  
years.

*Extremum  
Neronis  
Biennium  
deeſt. de  
Hiſt. La-  
tinis lib. 1.  
cap. 50.*

**I**N all the impressions of *Cornelius Tacitus*, his *Annals* are printed before his *History*; which is understood to be because they have a farther beginning, treating of the last daies of *Augustus*, and proceeding unto the end of *Nero's* Reign, whose last Twelve years are nevertheless wanting; whereas the books of his *History* seem to follow one another from the *Epoche* of the death of that *Tyrant*, to the happy government of *Nerva* and *Trajan*. And yet there is no doubt but *Tacitus* first composed his *History*, as being nearer to his own time; for he quotes a place in the Eleventh of his *Annals*, to which he refers his Reader, concerning what he had already writ of the actions of *Domitian*, which were not by him mentioned any here, but in the Books of his *History*. Of this *History* there remains to us but

Five



Five Books, and *Lipsius* guesses that there are Ten lost. For if they reached from *Galba*, to *Nerva*, and *Trajan*, which includes at least a space of Twenty one years, it is probable the greatest part of them are wanting, seeing the Five we have comprehend little more than the occurrences of one year.

Their Style is more large and florid than that of the *Annals*, which are composed in a close contracted phrase; but *Tacitus* his Eloquence appears every where in his grave way of writing, which has something of that *συστόλη* or sublimity in it, from which the Rhetoricians have observed, that *Demosthenes* never strayed. Amongst so many Censurers, who find every one something to say against the works of this Historian, none are more excusable than those who only complain of his obscurity. For as he often leaves his Narrations imperfect, he is sometimes found less intelligible. And the faults of the Copies, and depravation thereby of his sense, in many places, contributes much to render his matter difficult to be understood; but where the Paragraphs are intire and uncorrupted, his meaning is easily discovered. So soever it be, it is no wonder if *Tacitus* (having imitated *Thucydides*, and both followed *Demosthenes*) retained something of that roughness and austerity, which is observed in the writings of those two *Grecians*; and which all the Ancients accounted as a virtue, so far is it from deserving to be imputed as a fault.

*Muret. or.  
de Tac.*



fault, to him that should propose them to himself for Imitation. And as some Wines are recommended to our palates by a little bitterness that is in them ; and many persons find that a dusky and obscure light in Churches is most suitable to their exercise of devotion : so others conceive the obscurity of an Author, mixed with a little roughness of Stile, is rather to be esteemed than otherwise ; because it disposes the mind to attention, and elevates and transports it to notions which it would not arrive at in a more easy composition.

As for those who were so confident to pretend that *Tacitus* writ ill Latin, I judge them more worthy of compassion for that extravagance, than any solid answer. Yet Two great Civilians were of that opinion, *Alciat*, who maintained that the Phrase of *Paulus Fovius* was preferable to that of this Ancient Historian, which, he said, *was full of Thornes* ; and *Ferret*, who condemn'd his Stile, as being in his judgment not *Roman* enough. If ever men were absurd in censures, doubtless these were : and I do affirm against such unreasonable opinions, that apparently *Tacitus* makes the least Groome or Cook, in narratives, speak better Latin than either *Ferret*, or *Alciat* : they are indeed learned in the Law, but very bad judges of the Roman Eloquence. For though *Tacitus* has not writ like *Cæsar*, or *Cicero*, that is no argument of his bad performance. Eloquence is not uniform ; there are divers kinds of it : and it is not un-  
known



known to the Learned, that Latin flourished in all of them differently till the Reign of the Emperor *Adrian*, who was not so Ancient as *Tacitus*, to whom the greatest Orators of his time freely yielded the Palm of History And *Pliny* the younger who was one of the most considerable amongst them, declared in many of his Epistles, that he esteemed *Tacitus* one of the most Eloquent of his Age. In the Twentieth Epistle of the first Book, he makes him Judge of a dispute he had, about the Eloquence to be used in pleading at the Bar, against a learned man that maintained the most concise to be alwaies the best. And in another place he describes to one of his friends the Pomp of *Virginus Rufus* his Funerals, observing his last and principal happiness to consist in the praises of the Consul *Cornelius Tacitus*, who made his funeral Oration, and who was the most eloquent of that time; *laudatus est à Cornelio Tacito. Nam hic supremus felicitati ejus cumulus accessit laudator eloquentissimus.* When he imparts to another called *Arrian*, the success of a great cause against a Proconsul of *Africa*, accused of robbing the publique Treasury, he saies, that *Cornelius Tacitus* made a replication to the person that defended him, wherein his Eloquence and gravity inseparable from his discourse were admired; *respondit Cornelius Tacitus eloquentissimè; & quod eximium orationi ejus inest, σεμνῶς.* And when the same *Pliny* designed to provide a publick Preceptor for the City of *Coma* in his Native Country,

Epist. 1  
l. 2.

Ib. ep. 11

L. 4. ep. 13



Lib. 6. ep.  
16. et 20.

Lib. 7. ep.  
33.

Ib. ep. 20.

try, he intreated *Tacitus*, as one to whom all the great Wits of the Age applied themselves, to commend one to him to exercise that charge. I mention not the descriptions he makes him, in two different *Letters*, of the death of the Elder *Pliny* his Uncle, and of the burning of *Vesuvius*, which he was so desirous, that the History of *Tacitus* should describe, that he conjures him elsewhere not to forget his name in it, declaring his passion for it in terms, which I think not unfit to rehearse in this place: *Auguror, nec me fallit augurium, Historias tuas immortales futuras, quo magis illis, ingenue fatebor, inseri cupio. Nam si esse nobis curæ solet, ut facies nostra ab optimo quoque artifice exprimatur, nonne debemus optare, ut operibus nostris similis tui scriptor predicatorque contingat.* But the place, wherein *Pliny* shews most the esteem which he and all *Italy* had of *Tacitus*, is that of another *Letter*, where he declares that from his youth upwards he had chosen him for a pattern of Eloquence, from amongst the great number of excellent Orators, which were then in *Rome*. And because we learn precisely from that place the age of those two men, I will again very willingly insert it in its native language: *Equidem adolescentulus cum tu jam fama gloriaque floreres, te sequi, tibi longo, sed proximus intervallo & esse & haberi concupiscebam. Et erant multa clarissima ingenia, sed tu mihi (ita similitudo naturæ ferebat) maxime imitabilis, maxime imitandus videbaris.* There is no need to seek other



other proofs of *Tacitus* his reputation in his own time, which produced so many excellent persons: and few are ignorant how all the following ages have honoured his endeavours, whereof we shall give some more Testimonies before we finish this Section. But in the mean time is it not strange, that any should be so barbarous as *Alciat* and *Ferret*, and contradictory to all the Ancient Romans, to maintain that so considerable an Author could not so much as speak his mother-tongue? One must certainly have a brazen face, and a very empty head to advance such propositions. For my part should I see a Thousand things that displeased me, I should rather accuse my own weak understanding, or the faults of the Copies, or some other defect ( which ought not to be imputed to him ) than give the lye to all Antiquity, by falling into such an imaginary imputation.

There is a third sort of *Tacitus* his accusers, who tax him of speaking untruths; *Vopiscus* is of that number. But because he only arraigns him to excuse himself in this general proposition, that the best Historians of the world cannot avoid the mixture of lies in their truest narrations. *Tacitus* his reputation seems not to be much concerned therein. We have shown elsewhere that several persons took delight to maintain this thesis. And I remember *Dion Chrysostome* endeavouring to prove in one of his *Oration*s, that one never knows the truth of things, is not content

10



to say, that the taking of *Troy* by the *Graecians* is a meer Fable ; and that the *Persians* delivered a very different account of the wars of *Xerxes* and *Darius* against *Greece* , than the *Graecians* themselves ; but he adds, as a note of the small certainty there is in History, that amongst the most famous of the Greek Historians, some held that the Naval victory of *Salamin* preceded that of *Plataea*, and others asserted the contrary. It is sufficient then to answer, that there are untruths which our humanity bears with, when they are related by report, and without lying. But when *Tertullian* reproaches *Tacitus* with imposture, and *Budaus* calls him one of the most vile and impious Authors we have, it is evident that they mean something more than that sort of misreport, which ignorance may excuse ; and which one may retort upon errors Authorised by common belief. For they are offended at what he impiously spoke of Christians, & in derision of our holy religion, whom he assaults even in the foundations of the *Old Testament*, deriding the Miracles of *Moses*, and reproaching the *Jews* with adoring the *Effigies* of a *Wild Asse*. I confess that one cannot too much condemn what he writ on that subject, as he was a *Pagan*. But nevertheless we must be forced to acknowledg, that if he must be totally renounced for what he writ against the true God, and our Altars, we shall be obliged to burn with his Books, almost all those of the *Gentils*, very few of them having abstained from the like



the calumnies I say the same thing against the judgment which *Casaubon* in his *Preface*, passed upon *Polybius*, where he pretends that Princes cannot read a more dangerous book than *Tacitus*, because of the bad examples which are seen in it. For it is an ill custome that *Casaubon* has followed, never to write upon an Author without blaming all others, to give that the greater Authority; and we know that he has praised *Tacitus* elsewhere as much as any one can do. It is true his History has represented unto us, the actions of the most wicked Princes that ever were; and that by misfortune those Books which contained the best Emperors reigns, as of *Vespasian*, *Titus*, *Nerva*, and *Trajan*, are lost. Yet it is the way to censure all the Histories we have in the world, even without excepting the Holy Writ, to make that of *Tacitus* responsible for the bad examples it contains, there being none found that have not some very dangerous in them, and where there is no need of distinguishing with judgment, the good and the bad of every Narration. But perhaps heretofore, as even in *Tertullian's* time, the *Pagans* invectives against us might be apprehended, because the world was not then purged of their errors, as it is at present by the Grace of God. I cannot imagine that any person can be found at this day, that would let himself be seduced by the Calumnies of the *Ethnicks*; or by all that the infidelity they lived in, could make them write against our *Evangelical* truths.



The general esteem the works of *Tacitus* have gained, might suffice alone against the Authorities we have examined, though we wanted reasons to refute them. If it were needful to weaken them by other contrary authorities, I can produce Two, besides the Universal consent of learned men, which are so weighty that they will alwaies turn the Scale on their side. The first is that of the Emperor *Tacitus*, who though invested in the supreme dignity of the world, did not forbear near two hundred years after the death of our Historian, to glory in that name common to them, esteeming it as an honour to have had such an Ancestour, and to be acknowledged one of his Posterity. He caused his Statue to be placed in all Libraries, and all his books to be writ over Ten times every year, that they might pass from hand to hand, and from Age to Age, as they have done unto ours. The Second Authority shall be that of the Great Duke *Cosmo di Medicis*, whose memory will never want veneration, as long as the Science of Polity or good government (as his Countrymen term it) shall be cultivated. That Prince chose *Tacitus* amongst all the Historians, as one from whom his mind could receive the most instruction and solid satisfaction. Add to the Testimony of Princes and Emperors, that the translation of this Author into all Tongues, gives a certain proof of the vauew of him in all Nations. Besides his *Commentaries & History*, he wrote a *Treatise* of divers people who inhabited *Germany* in his time,



time, and of their different manners; with another *Book* of the *Life* of his Father in Law *Agri-  
cola*. Some moreover ascribe to him, the book En-  
titled *the causes of the corruption of Latin Elo-  
quence*, which others attribute to *Quintilian*, and  
which possibly belongs to neither of them, accord-  
ing to the probable conjecture of *Lipsius*. As for  
the collection of the book of *the pleasant sayings  
of Tacitus*, which *Fulgentius Planciades* mentions,  
it is a meer counterfeit, which never deceived any  
one but that Grammarian. The true compositions  
of *Tacitus* are discernable enough either by their  
form, or matter, taking, as *Scaliger* does, the words  
of the History for the matter, and the things it  
unfolds for the form. He scatters here and there  
throughout the whole, Oblique and Direct Orati-  
ons, as the condition of time, place, and persons  
require. But as concise as he is in his Stile, he  
flies out into Digressions in many places, witness  
that of the *God Sarapis* amongst the rest, in the  
Fourth Book of his History; and that other won-  
derful one in the Fifth, which we have already in  
some sort reflected on, relating to the Religion  
of the *Jews*, and that of *Moses* their *Law-giver*.  
He was of the opinion, that, as there is no Travel-  
ler who may not go out of his way sometimes, to  
see a memorable place, or some singular thing of  
the Countries he passes through; so the Laws of  
History do no more forbid a Writer to make some  
small excursions, which please and refresh the  
mind more than they divert it, when they are

*Taciti fa-  
cetie.*

*Lib. 2. de  
re poet. c.  
1. et l. 3.  
c. 1.*



used only in apt season, He is no less sententious than *Thucydides* or *Salust*, but with such artifice, that all the maxims he laies down, issue from the nature of the subjects he treats of, in the same manner as Stars are made of the proper substance of the Heavens. There is nothing of Foreign, affected, too far fetched, or superfluous in what he writes; each thought holds a place which becomes it so well, that it cannot be disputed. Moreover you do not only learn from him the events of things past; He seldom fails to discover their causes, and the foregoing counsels. One may say the same thing of History, as the *Poet* said of Husbandry.

*Virg. 2.  
Georg.*

*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*

*L. 1. Hist.*

And if what many people aver, be true, to wit, that the water is sweeter in the bottom of the Sea, than in the Superficies; it is more certain that an Historical relation, which only gives an insight into affairs, and the pursuance of events, leaving the Antecedent causes and advices unpenetrated, cannot be so useful or pleasant, as that which reveals all the mysteries thereof, and does not hide the greatest secrets contained in those affairs, which relish according to the comprehension we have of them. But that which heightens the merit of *Tacitus* his works, is the observation which others have made before me, that one often learns no less from what he left unsaid, than what he expressed, his silence being as instructive as his language, and his cyphers (to speak in the terms of numbers)



numbers ) as considerable as his most important figures, because all therein described is full of consideration, proportion, and judgment. Thus as the Ancients report, the *Painter Timanthes* left more in his Pictures to be imagined, than he exposed to the view of Spectators. And it is known that *Tacitus* did not set himself to write, before he was very old, after *Nerva's* Reign, and under that of *Trajan*, as he himself declares.



# REFLECTIONS

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# LUCIUS ANNÆUS.

## FLORUS.

**T**HEY who make *Lucius Florus* to live under *Trajan*, are obliged to correct that place of his *Preface*, where he saies there was little less than two hundred years, from *Augustus* his time to his. The most probable opinion is that he was of a little later time. And it is beleived that the *Poet Florus*, whose verses *Spartianus* quotes in the *Life of the Emperor Adrian*, is the same of whom we now write, the Author of the *Epitomy of the Roman History* in four books. The verses are in a very familiar Stile ;

*Ego nolo Caesar esse,  
Ambulare per Britannos,  
Scythicas pati pruinas.*

The Emperor *Adrian* was addicted to Poetry,  
as



as may be seen by the pleasant answer which he returned.

*Ego nolo Florus esse,  
Ambulare per Tabernæ  
Latitare per popinas,  
Calices pati rotundos.*

And one may see that the Phrase of his History is wholly Poetical, and that the love of *Parnassus* caused him sometimes, like *Virgil*, to imploy *Æmistichs* in his Periods, But though he seems very licentious in it, and his speech and expressions often favour more of a Declamer, than an Historian, yet we must affirm *Sigonius* to be very unjust, when he stiles him *an impertinent Writer*. The manner in which *Florus* treats of every War apart, did not deserve so severe a censure. And it is apparent, that he was ever acknowledged to be a very fluent Author, full of Eloquence, and very agreeable flowers of Oratory. He is moreover replenished with very ingenious sentences, thoughts expressed with force and vehemency. And laying aside some little places, which may be thought cold, in comparison of others, many refined precepts are contained in what he writes, which could not be expressed in better terms.

Some doubt whither *Florus* that made the four books above mentioned, was the same that composed Arguments to the books of *Livy's* history. Nevertheless it is a great mistake, to beleive that he intended to Epitomize the whole History of *Livy*, in his four books, for he does not follow it



in divers places, but rather pursues his particular fancy. Which is so extravagant in reference to *Chronology*, or the account of time, that it is not safe for any that will be truly informed, to take him for a guide in that matter, because of the many faults he has committed therein, through negligence, or otherwise. He is accused also of contriving the loss of *Livy's* works, to value his own collections; but I judge those that are of that opinion, to be in an error, such a sort of summary Narration being not sufficient so to satisfy the mind, as to make it reject a work, whereof that Compendium gives but a very superficial account.

Moreover some make *Seneca* to be the Author of the Compendious History of *Florus*, because *Lactantius* laies down, in the fifteenth Chapter of the Seventh book of his *Divine Institutions*, a Division of the Roman Empire into four different seasons, ascribing Metaphorically to it, Infancy, Youth, Virility and Old Age, which he attributes to *Seneca's* invention. And because the like division is seen, in the *Preface* of *Florus* his books, they conclude that *Seneca* is the Author of them; and that the name of *Florus* is to be no otherwise considered, than as a counterfeit. But he that shall well observe the writings of these two Authors, will easily discern great differences in them. *Seneca* makes the Youth or Adolescence of Rome, as he terms it, reach to the end of the last *Punick War*, whilst *Florus* makes it continue but to the first. And



And *Seneca* begins its *Old Age*, when the Civil Wars arose between *Julius Caesar*, and *Pompey*; whereas *Florus* accounts it from *Augustus* his establishment in the absolute power of the Empire. Is it not therefore more probable that *Florus* made use of *Seneca's* thought, varying it, and rendering it in a manner his own, by the alteration he made therein? I am apter to believe, that *Lactantius* was mistaken, than to imagine that all the Manuscripts should err, which have put *L. Annaeus Florus* in the Title of the Books we now mention. But perhaps *Florus* and *Seneca*, being both of the same family. *Viz.* that of the *Annaei*, their names may have been confounded by adoption, or otherwise; and that *Florus* was therefore sometimes called *Seneca*, as one cannot deny that he is in some old Copies; and some have given him also the Surname of *Julius*. Whereupon we must observe that the House of the *Heraclidae*, is not more honoured in the valour of the many gallant men it hath bestowed on the world, than that of the *Annaei* in the number of the excellent persons it has produced in all sorts of learning. *Seneca* the *Philosopher*, the *Tragedian*, and the *Rhetorician*, (if they are three) prove it sufficiently, as well as the Poet *Lucan*, and our *Historiographer*, whose *Stile* retains something of the *Genius* of that last *Family*, born all to be Masters of *Eloquence*, and *Poetry*. It will not be amiss to observe that the praises which *Florus* gave in many places to *Spain*, are reproached to him by those who think, that the  
love



Cap. 22.

love of his country induced him to exceed a little, in the sixth, seventeenth, and eighteenth Chapters of the second book, besides what he adds in the third, treating of the Warlike exploits of *Servorius* in that Country.

Lib. 1. in  
Tit. c. 3.

There was another *Julius Florus*, more Ancient than the *Historiographer*, who lived in *Tiberius* his reign. *Seneca*, in his *Controversies*, saies that he was instructed in the art of speaking well, by the Oratour *Portius Latro*. And *Quintilian*, speaking of that *Florus*, saies he was the Prince of *Eloquence*, and was a publick Professor of it in *Gallia*. They who build upon the Surname of *Julius* (which some Manuscripts attribute, as we have already said, to him whose History we examin ) imagin he may be descended from that other *Florus*, whereof *Seneca* and *Quintilian* have made such honourable mention. But it is a meer conjecture, and so light, that it deserves not to be further reflected on.

Pag. 134.

Lib. 2.  
Cap. 17.

I will only add, that amongst the Licences *Florus* has assumed, as we have already observed, there is one so Poetical, and strangely Hyperbolical, that *Scaliger* with reason blames him, in his *Commentaries upon Eusebius*, for having in a mistaken zeal, suffered himself to be led away, by a mean and childish appetite of relating wonderful things to the prejudice of truth. It is where he relates the expedition of *Decimus Brutus*, along the *Celtique, Galician, and Portuguese Coasts*. Where he alledges that *Brutus* never stopped his victorious course,



course, till he beheld the Sun fall into the Ocean, and heard with horreur its fire extinguish in the waters; which gave him a certain apprehension of being Sacrilegious, and to have done more than his religion permitted. *Putida ε̃ κακόζηλα sunt hæc*, saies *Scaliger*, after he had used these verms, *Florus τερατολογία Poetica drama amplificat*. The same desire of writing some strange thing ought to be censured in him, where he speaks of the defeat of the *Cimbri* by *Marius*. He pretends that two Young Men were seen in *Rome* near the Temple of *Castor* and *Pollux*, presenting to the *Prætor* Letters accompanied with Laurel, to witness a victory obtained. But I shall on this occasion repeat a Maxim, which I have elsewhere established, *viz* that if an Historian sometimes inserts any thing in his Narration, of so extraordinary a nature, he ought at the same time to signify the small faith he has therein, and protest that he meerly reports it as a popular rumor.

REFLECT



# REFLECTIONS UPON THE HISTORY OF SUETONIUS.

I Have hinted in the Preface of this Book, that I would not have ranked *Suetonius* with the other Historians, if what he writ of the twelve first *Cæsars*, had not contained as well as their Lives, an Historical series of what happened, during so considerable a time as an Age and more. Moreover I observe that no body mentions the Roman History, without speaking very advantageously of *Suetonius*; and *Lodovicus Vives* has not stuck to prefer him for diligence, and fidelity, to all the Greek and Latin Writers extant. *Boadæ* likewise affirms, that none of them has composed any thing exacter, or better accomplished, than what we have of this Historian. But though he is very deserving, I should be loath to ascribe so much to him, as to celebrate his praise to the prejudice of those whom we have hitherto

*Lib. 5. de  
Grad. dist.*



hitherto treated of. I allow him to be one of the Principal of the Latin Writers. He was Secretary of State to the Emperor *Adrian*, which is an evidence that he possessed, besides the knowledge of Great Affairs, a competent capacity to deliver them in proper and apt expressions. It is said, his employment was taken from him, because of some private familiarity he had with the Empress *Sabina*, which was disliked, as if the respect and reverence due to her supreme dignity, had been thereby violated. But it happens sometimes that particular disgraces are useful to the publick, as was evidenced in his person, at his fall, and the leisure he had by it, reduced him to a studious contemplation, which has procured us amongst other works, that which gives him a place amongst the best Historians.

Besides his Historical Labour, we have part of his Treatise of the *Illustrious Grammarians*, and that of the *Rhetoricians*, and some remains of another which contained the *Lives* of the *Poets*. For that of *Terence* is almost all of *Suetonius* his writing, as *Donatus* himself confesses, who adds something to it. And the *Lives* of *Horace*, *Juvenal*, *Lucan*, and *Perseus*, are probably of the same composition. However it be, some write that St *Hierome* took him for his Pattern, when he made his *Catalogue* of the *Ecclesiastical Writers*. But we ought not to believe, that which is extant of the Elder *Pliny's Life*, under the name of *Suetonius*, to be of his writing; and if the Style were



were not an obstacle, the Phrase is enough to discover it to be of a more modern contexture. *Suetonius* was too much a friend to the Younger *Pliny*, (as it is apparent in his *Epistles*) to speak so coldly, and say so little of his Uncle, that was a most worthy person. There are many of the *Epistles* of the Nephew addressed to *Suetonius*, in one whereof *Pliny* takes notice, that he desired him to defer for some daies, the pleading of his cause, on the occasion of an ominous dream, which made him apprehend at that time, the event of his business. This shews on the one side that *Suetonius* was superstitious; and the answer *Pliny* makes him, importing that dreams are often to be taken in the contrary sense witnesses that he yeilded no less than his friend, to that sort of vanity. And in another *Epistle* *Pliny* merrily menaces *Suetonius*, that if he delayed to publish his writings, he would change the *Hendecasyllables*, which he had made in their praise, into *Scazons* of defamation, adding withal, to incourage their publication, that his work was arrived to such a state of perfection, that the file instead of making it brighter, did now diminish its value, and weaken it. *Perfectum opus absolutumque est, nec jam splendescit lima, sed atteritur.*

One may read in *Aulus Gellius*, *Servius*, *Tzetzez*, and in *Suidas*, the Titles of several Compositions of *Suetonius*, which we have lost; As that of the *Games and Spectacles* or *Shewes* represented by the *Romans*; The *Republick of Cicero*; An Ac-

COUNT

Lib. i. ep.  
18.

Lib. 5. ep.  
11.



count of the *Illustrious Families of Rome*; and many others. *Suidas* gives him barely the character of *Roman Grammarian*, a Quality much more considered in that time, than it has been since. *Ausonius* mentions a Treatise of *Kings*, writ by *Suetonius* in three books, whereof *Pontius Paulinus* contracting them made a Poem. Moreover the Surname of *Tranquillus*, which is given to *Suetonius*, is in effect the same in signification, as that of his Father, whom he himself calls, in *the Life of Otho*, *Suetonium Lenem*, reporting that his charge of Tribune of the thirteenth Legion, obliged him to be present, when that Emperors Troops engaged against those of *Vitellius*. They therefore were deceived who beleived, that this *Suetonius* of whom we write, was Son of that *Suetonius Paulinus*, whereof *Tacitus*, *Pliny*, and *Dion* make mention. *Sicco Polentonus*, and *Muret* committed this error, which *Lipsius*, and Some Others judiciously repair, there being no reason in what they affirm, to confound a Military Tribune with a Consul. *Gerardus Vossius* shews also the mistake of those who read, in the tenth Chapter of the first book of the *Divine Institutions* of *Lactantius*, *Tranquillus*, instead of *Tarquitius*, who was another Author very learned in the Pagan Religion, and whom probably in that respect, *Lactantius* speaking of *Æsculapius*, rather intends than our *Suetonius*.

But to return to his particular History of the Twelve first Emperors, There are some Criticks which affirm, that the beginning of the first book

Ep. 19.

Cap. 157

In vita  
Suet. var.  
lett. l. 5.  
Co. IX.



is wanting, and the ground of their opinion is founded on the improbability, that *Suetonius* should have writ nothing of the birth and first years of *Julius Caesar*, when he took the pains to search into the Original, and Education, of eleven other Emperors that succeeded, whose lives he has described. He laboured in it, according to the judgment of *S<sup>t</sup> Hierome*, (with the same liberty as Sovereigns so absolute assumed) in a condition exempt from all sort of fear. *Muret* indeed, in his *Oration* upon *Tacitus*, converts this to his disadvantage, and maintains that *S<sup>t</sup> Hierome* rather blamed, than praised him in that saying. For, saies *Muret*, it were to be wished, that we had not learned so many Riots, and shameful Vices, as he declares to have been practised by the *Tiberii*, *Nerones*, and *Caligula*. They are, saies he, so filthy, that they almost make the Paper blush, upon which they are represented. And if what one of the Ancients saies, be true, namely that there is but little difference, between him who describes such infamy with care, and he who teaches it; we shall have much ado to excuse *Suetonius*, for having acted such a part as he did. And to augment his charge, he is accused of having used the Christians ill, calling them a sort of men, who imbraced a new, and mischievous superstition, which made them be persecuted in *Nero's* time. But, as we have already answered to the like objections in other Sections, is there any of all the Historians of repute, who is

*Eadem libertate scripsit, quâ ipse vixerunt.*

*Parum abest à doctente qui talia narrat.*

*In Ner. cap. 16.*



not guilty, if it be a crime in him, to have represented the wicked actions of those they write of, which makes the greatest, and often the most considerable part of the narration? Does not the Sacred History it self, shew us Parricides, Incests, Idolatry, and many other Profanations, amongst the best examples, and holiest instructions? And ought we not to cast into the fire all the books of those Pagans, who have writ since the beginning of Christianity, if what they exposed against our Religion, should make us absolutely condemn it.

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R E F L E C-



# REFLECTIONS UPON THE HISTORY OF JUSTIN

**S**OME think they are to blame that complain of Abreviators, because without contributing to the loss of the writings they epitomised, they have not left us destitute of the most remarkable memorials of many Authors, of whose works nothing now remains. But those which are of this opinion, ought to confess themselves obliged to *Justin*, by whose Industry, the Great Labour of *Trogus Pompeius* is so happily reduced into little, that we have few Latin compositions more considerable than his *Epitome*, either for the Stile, or matter thereof. Yet methinks, these sort of writers are not sufficiently discharged, in asserting that they have left behind them valuable works, unless it be made to appear, that they have not been accessory to the loss of the Originals, which is the crime imputed



to them by many Learned Men, as we have already observed in the Chapters of *Herodotus*, *Dion Cassius*, and *Livy*. The Extracts or Collections of that Understanding Emperor *Porphyrigenius* are instanced on this occasion. And *Triboonianus* meets with the like entertainment, for having made a defective compilation, in his *Pandects*, of the Texts, or rather Oracles, of all those Ancient Lawyers, whose excellent reasonings, and elegant expressions, ought to have been preserved from so bold an attempt. A very speculative modern Author speaking of *Epitomes*, does not stick to call them *Moths and Worms that gnaw History*, which have made such a spoil therein, that there often remain but miserable shreds of the first contexture. And indeed there ought to be more than a bare negation, to refute so probable an opinion; though it may be alledged that the works of most Abreviators, and those of *Justin* amongst the rest, ought to be now very acceptable to us, because we can have recourse to no other relations of the matter they deliver.

*Verulam  
de aug.  
Scient.  
2. c. 6.*

It is easy to make a near guess at the time when *Trogus Pompeius* lived, by what he said in his forty third book, of his Parents that came from *Gallia Narbonensis*, where he declares his Grandfather to be made a Citizen of *Rome*, by the favour of *Pompey the Great* (whose Surname probably he took) during the Wars of *Sertorius*; and that his Father, after he had borne Arms under *Caius Caesar* (who is here taken for the first



Emperor who bore that name, rather than for *Calpurnia* ) had the honour to be his Secretary, and jointly to keep his Seal. It is therefore thought, that *Trogu* *Pompeius* wrote his History under *Augustus* and *Tiberius*, having taken of the former at the end of the whole work. It was divided into forty four books, whose number *Justin* has not changed, no more than their Title, which was *the Philippick History*, because ( as it appears from the seventh unto the one and fortieth book, ) it was a continued narration of the *Macedonian* Empire, which owed its rise to *Philip* Father of *Alexander* the Great. *Theopompus* had written before, fifty eight books called *Philippicks*, which are quoted by *Athenæus* and *Diodorus*, and by Some held to be the Model which *Trogu Pompeius* followed ; as *Cicero*, imitating *Demosthenes*, named his Orations *Philippicks*, with much less reason. The seven first books of that History, in pursuance of the Title we mention, comprised the first beginnings of the world, or of the Inhabitants thereof, together with descriptions of Places and Countries, which *Justin* has apparently cut off, as it may be collected from the Ancient *Preambles* before each book of *Trogu Pompeius* published by *Bongars*. But we had been more fully satisfied herein, if that Friend of *Aldus*, who bragged he had in his hands all the works of that Historian, and would even in a short time have thrown them the light, had said a truth.

what relates particularly to *Justin*, he made



Under his Epitome, according to the most common opinion, under *Antoninus* surnamed *Pius*, to whom it is thought he dedicated it in his Preface. I know, the passage wherein that Emperor is mentioned, is diversly interpreted; and some have been persuaded, that he wrote after the Establishment of the *Roman* Empire in *Constantinople*, because of a place in the eighth book, where he speaks of the Sovereign power of *Greece*. But that may admit other interpretations, without a necessity of making him live two hundred years later than he did, and in an Age which produced nothing so polite or elegant, as all we have of this Author is. Yet it is a greater error to confound him with *Justin the Martyr*, as one *Martin a Polander* did in his *Chronicle*. For though these Two *Justins* were Contemporary, the manner how the *Historian* treats the *Hebrews* in his six and thirtieth book, where he will have *Moses* to be the Son of *Joseph*, and the Latter a very Great Magician, shows that he was of the Pagan belief. And *Justin the Martyr* never wrote but in Greek, nor did *Jerome*, *St. Hieron*, or *Phetius* rank the Library of *Tragus Pompeius*, amongst his Works. Though *St. Hieron* indeed quotes something of it in his Preamble upon *Daniel*: And no Author more Ancient than that Father of the Church, spoke of *Justin the Historian*.

He was not loath to use Pious Orations, when he whom he censured, had condemned them



in *Salust* and *Livy*, as we have already elsewhere mentioned. Which appears in the eight and thirtieth book, where he rehearses in an Oblique form, that long Oration of *Mithridates* to his Souldiers, to animate them against the Romans. And that of *Agathocles* in the twenty second book, pronounced as soon as he arrived at *Africa*, to encourage his Troops then terrified by the obscurity of an Eclipse of the Sun, is no less considerable than that of *Mithridates*, though it be shorter. But he is censured by Some, for introducing a few Digressions in a work so close and short, as the History he writes. The first is found in the beginning of his second book, where the *Scythians* and the *Egyptians* have a debate on the point of honour, in what relates to their Antiquity, both of them pretending to have sufficient reasons to call themselves, the most Ancient People of the Earth. The second is in the twentieth book, on the subject of *Pythagoras*, whose birth, voyages, learning, virtues, and death, he describes, without forgetting the misfortune which happened to his Disciples, whereof threescore were burnt in *Crotan*, and the rest exiled. Whence one may conclude, that all sort of Digressions are not to be condemned; when so eminent an Author as *Justin*, who contracted into so little a space, the History of the Transactions of two thousand years (which are reckoned from *Ninus* the Founder of the *Assyrian* Monarchy, to the Emperor *Augustus*) made no difficulty some-



sometimes to divert himself this way upon an agreeable subject.

But though *Justin's* manner of writing is so excellent, that it was thought worthy of *Augustus's* his Age, rather than of that of the *Antonine*; his elegance of Style cannot atone for his mistakes in relation. *Pererius* has convinced him of many errors in reference to the Jews, in his *Commentaries upon Daniel*. And *Vopiscus* places him in the rank of Historians who could not avoid lying: but one may say, that his associating him with *Livy*, *Salust*, and *Tacitus*, renders that accusation very light. That which he cannot be excused in, is Chronology, where he was so much mistaken, that one ought not to follow him alwayes. And that which makes his fault the greater, is that the reputation of *Trogus Pompeius*, and the esteem which all the Ancients had for him, obliges men to think, that those misreckonings in the sequel of times, are rather of the Copy, than the Original, or of the Abreviator, rather than the Primitive Author. Which is the ordinary judgment of those who have laboured most in the best Editions of *Justin*.

Cap. 42.

In Aurelio.



I Should have ended here, according to my first intention, not finding after *Justin* and the time of the *Antonines*, any Latin Historian amongst the Ancients, whence one might draw any profitable instruction to compose a History, or whose works might merit a serious reflection, unless it should be absolutely to condemn the exposition, and ill conduct of them. They who are usually called the Writers of the *August History*. *Spartianus*, *Wlcatius Gallicanus*, *Trebellius Pollio*, *Julius Capitolinus*, *Lampridius*, and *Vopiscus*, have nothing in them contrary to this proposition, or otherwise considerable, except it be that they teach us things of many Emperors, whereof we hardly learn any thing elsewhere, though indeed *Vopiscus* is the least faulty of them. *Trebellius Pollio* may be put in the second order. *Spartianus*, *Lampridius*, and *Wlcatius* are incomparably more faulty and more negligent than the others; and *Julius Capitolinus* is the worst of all, by the advice of those who have taken the pains to examine them. But it is very strange that a whole Age and more should pass away, from that of the *Antonines* to *Diocletian* (under whom all those before mentioned did write) without the appearance of one good Historian in the Roman Empire, who might deserve to have his works descend to us. Neither will *Sextus Aurelius Victor* (who came a little after) merit a better esteem, whose abridged History



dory contains but a word of each Emperor's Life, from *Augustus* to *Julian*; nor would it be an advantage to him if we should confound in one, the Authors who bore the same name of *Severus*, *Probus*, or *Modestus* the Great. And as *Isidore*, who dedicates almost at the same time, his *Historical Chronicle*, to the Emperor *Valens*, and whom *Julian* calls an *Italian Sophister*, I shall say little of him, as having nothing comparable in his writings, to those of the celebrated Authors, whose works we have examined. There remains only *Ammianus Marcellinus*, whom I cannot with a good conscience decline, he having compiled a just body of History, and by whom I will finish this Treatise: for we cannot extend it to the Age of *Justinian*, as we have done that of the Greek Historians; unless we should introduce *Jordanes*, and *Cassiodorus*, indiscreetly mingling the barbarity of the *Goths*, with the purity and address of the best Authors of the Latin Language.

REFLEC-



# REFLECTION

## UPON THE

# HISTORY

## OF

# AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS.

**I**T must be confessed, that *Ammianus Marcellinus* is not considerable in respect of the beauty of his language. For he was a *Greek* by Nation, as he himself declares at the end of his last book. And from an *Epistle* of *Libanius* to him, it is inferred, that he was a Citizen of *Antioch*; he speaks of him with Elogies, as often as occasion does occur, excusing him in his two and twentieth Book, on the subject of the *Invectives* of the *Misopogon* of *Julian*, which he affirms to have been excessive, and contrary to what might be justified with truth. After the death of the Emperor *Valens*, he retired to *Rome*, where it is beleived by very probable conjectures, that he compiled his History after he had passed through the most honourable Offices of the *Militia*, which he exercised under divers Emperors, having been in his youth,



youth, of the number of those who were then named *Troctores Domestici*; which was a Quality that resembles that of the *Gardes du Corps* in France, an ordinary step to the highest Employments of the State. He flourished under the Emperors *Gratianus* and *Valentinian*, and wrote his History in one and thirty books, which he began at the end of *Domitians* Reign, or the beginning of *Nerva*, and continued to the death of *Valens*; the first thirteen of them are lost, and the eighteen that remain, are full of imperfections, which the injury of time, and the insolent tenacity of Critics have introduced in them, as the learned Author of the last Edition of that work, has very prudently observed.

Guard of  
the King  
of France  
1642.

Hen. Val-  
lesius.

It is easy to judge that the books of *Ammianus* his History, which are wanting, were writ much more compendiously, than those we have; for he comprised in the thirteen first, the Reigns of as many *Cesars*, as were betwixt *Nerva* and *Constantinus*, who makes the beginning of the fourteenth; all the rest which followed being employed to describe, what past from that last Emperor's, to *Gratian's* time, under seven Reigns only. We have spoken in the Section of *Josephus*, of those who undertook to write in Foreign Languages. I will not repeat any thing here that I there mentioned; but only add, that if the History of *Ammianus Marcellinus* receives some prejudice from his defects in the Latin Elocution, in which a *Grecian*, and a Soldier by profession as he was, could

not



not very much excell, it is so well recompensed by the merit of the thoughts, and all the rest of his work, that an advantageous place, among the Prime and Principal Historians, cannot be refused him. He is of the number of those who write the things they saw, in which they often had a great part; wherefore he has something common with *Cæsar* and *Xenophon*. Nevertheless I do not think (as others have done) that he is that *Free Prince* of *Dalmatia* and *Illyria*, of whom *Suidas* speaks, though he bore the same name, and was a great friend of *Salustius* the *Philosopher*, who ought not to be confounded with another of that name a Principal commander of the *Prætorian Militia*, under *Valentinian*. But *Ammianus Marcellinus* is very much to be valued; because, though he was a Pagan, he had the discretion to publish nothing directly contrary to Christianity; and abstained from many *Invectives*, which his equals often in that time used against our Religion. He gives indeed excessive praises to *Julian*; and though that *Apostate* cannot be too much detested, for his infidelity and revolt, yet it cannot be denied but he was indued, according to the ordinary definitions of the Schools, with the Moral and intellectual virtues of Chastity, Magnanimity, Learning, and Temperance, unless the faith of all Histories that have writ of him be disputed; which is needless in the Age in which we live, wherein the grace of God has left us nothing more to fear from the Idolatry of the Ancients. If the opi-

nion

Lib. de  
virtute  
Paganorum.



nion of *Gesner*, may be allowed, who maintains that *Martellus* the Historian is the same that writ the *Life of Thucydides*, it may be wondered that he treated Christianity with so much moderation. The Author of that *Life* commends *Thucydides* for nothing so much, as that he had the power over himself, to so bear writing with Animosity, against *Cleon*, or *Brasidas* ( who had caused him to be banished ) never showing any where his resentment of so great an injury ; though, to speak the truth, he did not wholly refrain from representing the bad conditions of *Cleon*. It is no marvel then, that *Marcellinus* practised himself what he esteemed so much in others, or that he made use of that virtue in his discourses, which he commended in those of *Thucydides*.

One of the considerations which ought to oblige us to a greater esteem of the History of *Ammianus*, is, that we have none like that, which gives us the knowledge of many Antiquities of the *Gaules*, or so well explains the Originals of the first *French*, *German*, and *Burgundians*, of whom it makes frequent mention. Moreover it contains many things besides, which are found no where else, and has had the approbation of all Ages since it was writ, because of the sincerity and veracity of the Author. And for his reputation, we may add to what has been already said of him, and his employments, that he passed his last years with great reputation, under the Emperors *Gratian*, *Valentinian*, and *Theodosius* the Great.

Meaning  
the *Fres.*

But



But all these Encomiums no protect him, from being accused of having too often acted the part of a philosopher in his writings, affecting to appear learned beyond what the Laws of History permit, which do not admit of entertainments of so great ostentation, as many of those he relates.

It is the ordinary fault of those that are distinguished by their profession, from men of letters, and has great resemblance to that vice, which the *Greeks* named *ὀψιμαθία*, which signifies a learning in old age; because they which study when they are advanced in age, and against the Rules of the usual course of study, are much more subject to it than others. And indeed, *Ammianus Marcellinus* cannot be justified in many places of his History, where he indecently quits the prosecution of his narration, to enter upon discourses of Philosophy, and other Sciences, which have hardly any relation to the matters whereof he treats. But to make the thing clearer, and consequently more instructive, will produce two or three examples of his practice herein,

In the seventeenth book, speaking of terrible Earthquakes, which happened under the Reign of *Constantius* in *Macedonia*, in the Province which at that time bore the name of *Pontus*, and in many parts of *Asia Minor*, he makes an excellent description, and not improperly, of the strange Ruines which *Nicomedia* the Capital City of *Bithynia* suffered by this accident. And if he had stopped there, he had done enough, but he takes occasion on that subject,



subject, to seek for the Physical causes of such things in the lowest part of the Universe. And considers what the Priests of his Religion said of it. Thence, examining the reasons of *Aristotle*, *Anaxagoras*; and *Anaximander*, strengthened by the Testimony of the Poets, and Theologians, he shews that there are four sorts of Earthquakes. And after a long enumeration of the new Isles, which appeared in divers places after such shocks, he relates those that were swallowed up by a quite contrary violence, and one amongst the rest, which was of a greater extent than all Europe, and was swallowed by the *Atlantic* Sea; which doubtless he took from *Plato's Timæus* though he does not name him. At last having a long time Philosophically expatiated himself, he begins his narration again with *Julian's* residence at *Paris*, being then only a designed *Cesar* or *Emperor*.

In the beginning of the twentieth book, he takes notice of a great Eclipse of the Sun, in the year when the *Scotch* & the *Picts* visited *England*, which was that of the tenth *Consulat* of *Constantine*, and the third of *Julian*. As this was a good observation to be made, and very worthy of his History, so there is no reason on that circumstance, to fall upon the most feverish miseries of *Affricany*, nor on any in what concerns those *Barbarous* defects of the light of the Sun, but also in what touches the travels of the Moon, as the Poets say, when the Earth darkens it with it shadow. He expounds on that subject the opinion of *Ptolemy*, in the same words



words he uses and not content to hear of *L*ses, he inquires into the cause of the *malitia*, which we think we see more than one Sun in the Heavens; so that one would think in this place, quite abandoning the prosecution of his History deliver to his readers, a Lecture of Astronomy. vertheless at last he resumes his discourse, recounting the preparations of *Constantinus* against the *Per- sians*, and his jealousy of the brave actions of *Julian*, after a tiresome and intolerable excursion.

The third and last example of the vicious digressions of *Ammianus*, is in his thirtieth Book, where he observes with curiosity and profit, how the Emperor *Valens* was diverted by his Courtiers from hearing causes pleaded, and assisting at judgments, that they might thereby pursue their unjust *Monopolies*; and because they feared, considering his rigid and severe nature, he would cause justice to be exercised as legally and justly, as it was a little before, under the government of *Julian*. Thence he takes occasion to inveigh against the profession of Advocates, which he says, *Epicurus* named the *Art of Knavery* *Κακότηχία*. And the better to represent the infamous proceedings of those of his time, he exaggerates the merit of one *Demosthenes*, that made all *Greeks* come to *Athens*, when he was to speak in publick; and of one *Callistratus*, who made even *Demosthenes* leave *Plato* in his Academy to go and hear him; And then he mentions *Hyperides*, *Ctesicles*, *Androcles*, *Dinarchus*, and one *Antiphan*, who was the first



Subj. 4. The author has been so much affected by the  
that, a well known cause. He has been so much affected  
con. He has been so much affected by the  
of it. He has been so much affected by the  
and the value of the defence of the  
the formerly, they that he has extended the chief  
the payments of State, after having been a Senator,  
admirals, Generals, and had triumphed, did not  
to take a place at the bar; and add to the  
glory of their preceding actions, as a Corollary,  
that having had the applause of a whole Audi-  
ence in pleading. And after having shown so fine a  
scene, he draws the Curtain, to expose to all eyes  
the shameful and criminal prostitution of the Ad-  
vocates of his Age, dividing them into four sorts,  
whose impurities, imperinencies, and perplexing  
tricks he does so particularly display, that one has  
much ado to get out of the Labyrinth, to recover  
the narration; and return to *Valentinian* in *Tyres*,  
where he had left him. Though his Declamation  
is very moral and elegant being separately consid-  
ered, it must needs be troublesome and tedious  
as he introduces it, because it too visibly inter-  
rupts the course of the History. And those that  
would be instructed in *Physics*, *Astronomy*, or  
*Moral Philosophy*, do not seek such lessons in an  
Historian, and to those that design to be instructed  
in History, nothing can be more uneasy, than to  
find in the midst of a relation foreign discourses,  
which divide or lead the mind, and do but  
show his learning, that excels them.



In the  
Edition of  
Agathias.  
Lib. 2.  
cap. 8.

Besides a vicious ostentation, which one easily perceive in those three passages. I instance *Ammianus Marcellinus* is blamed for giving certain descriptions so Poetical that they are hardly sufferable. And though we have elsewhere observed, History and Poetry are good friends enough, and agree in many things; *Cassius* Jesuite, in his *Treatise of Eloquence*, gives several examples of this defect, which appear so frequently in the writings of *Ammianus*, that it is hard not to find some in every opening of the book. But all these censures cannot deprive him of the praise we have given him. There are generally speaking certain things in books that are displeasing, which nevertheless are not to be rejected, because they serve for a Basis to others which are better, and are like the Lees, which preserve the Wine, in its spirits.

But after all that has been said, the imperfections of this Historian seem to me so much the less considerable, as the virtues of his Age were rare. And it is that which induces me to put an end here to my labour, hardly finding after him, any thing but gross errors, in the writings of those Authors of the next succeeding age, which busied themselves in writing Latin History. To write of the Modern Historians is not my design, and the Interval of time which divides them from the first of that order, is a just occasion for me to make a stop here.